President Kim Il Sung

President Kim Il Sung

— Interviews and Impressions —

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The great leader Comrade Kim Il Sung

Editor's Note

President Kim Il Sung, the great leader of the Korean people, celebrated his 80th birthday on April 15, 1992. On this occasion a two-volume book entitled *President Kim Il Sung*, published in Japan in the Japanese language, was presented to him as a gift with the impressions (collected in historical order) of well-known figures in political and public circles, who had visited Korea at some time and had had the honour of being received by the President.

Our publishing house is translating articles selected from the book, which were compiled in chronological order, and publishing them in several languages.

April 1993

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A Decisive Step Taken by General Kim Il Sung 46 Years Ago

Kanakatsu Noboru, Vice-President of
the Takezawa Building Company, Ltd.,
and Member of the Japan-Korea
Society for Cultural Interchange

Reception Day–June 3, 1946

I met President Kim Il Sung for the first time in 1946. He was then the Chairman of the Provisional People's Committee of North Korea (PPCNK) and was called the General.

Owing to Japan's defeat on August 15, 1945, I, who had grown up in old Manchuria but was living in Tokyo while studying, passed every day uneasily, not knowing anything about my brothers.

Although it was not preliminarily arranged the students who were in the same straits as I was, gathered and organized the Students' Union for Relief to Parents and Brothers Abroad. I worked as a functionary in charge of its executive department.

On looking back, I still do not understand how I dared to make such a perilous attempt as to infiltrate into north Korea. But at any rate, I think I was prompted by the thought that if our compatriots in Korea were not returned to their country as soon as possible, their tiding over the end of the year in north Korea, where the cold is so intense, would be a serious matter. My courage was also redoubled by the silent support of many schoolmates, who discontinued their studies and joined the army, to be killed in action.

I was determined that, at the risk of my life, I would get to north Korea and meet General Kim Il Sung directly, and would present him a petition asking him to take steps for the Japanese in Korea to return home as soon as possible.

However, it seemed almost impossible for me to leave Japan secretly and to get into south Korea, and then also to cross the 38th parallel.

But, I did it, because I was then a 24-year-old young man in full form

and ardently wanted to rescue my compatriots including my parents.

Through the good offices of a Korean in Japan, named Yoshihara Kozo, I joined the Koreans towards the end of May 1946 who would be returning to south Korea from Hakata by a landing boat of the US army, and crossed over to south Korea.

I reached the 38th parallel a week after my departure from Tokyo. I chose a rainy night to cross. Looking at the light of an outpost on my right side, I crossed, almost crawling on all fours and covered all over with mud.

By good fortune, I finally arrived at Pyongyang. Ready to be arrested, I rushed through the front gate of the PPCNK, pleading silently, "Please, let me meet General Kim Il Sung".

I was stopped by a very young soldier, standing sentry with a rifle in hand. However, to my surprise, he spoke fluently in Japanese, "Because north Korea is a democratic state, there's no doubt that a student from Tokyo will be able to meet General Kim Il Sung".

After the soldier had enquired about various things, I was permitted an interview with him on that unforgettable day–June 3, 1946. The building was located near Pyongyang Station.

On hearing the words, "You can meet the General soon", I went upstairs. I was waiting in some room when General Kim Il Sung entered. He was of magnificent physique, unconventional.

His secretary introduced me. The secretary, who was said to be a student of the Meiji University, spoke very good Japanese.

The secretary told me, "Go ahead, please", so I said with eyes full of tears: "The Japanese remaining in Korea have run short of provisions, are suffering from infectious diseases and cannot travel and work at will. We ardently want Your Excellency to bestow the favour of realizing their early possible return to Japan...."

His Excellency heard me out attentively. Then he said warmly: "I know the situation of the Japanese very well. We've achieved liberation and independence just now with difficulty, so that we are short of provisions. For a beginning, I'll arrange to have them make internal travel or do business. And I'll do my best to have them return to Japan as soon as possible."I shed a happy tear.

The interview lasted for no more than 15 minutes but I felt as if it had been a very long time. As General Kim Il Sung left for his office with a nod, I thought what a noble personality he had and how warmhearted he was.

Sometime later, thanks to his decisive measure, the repatriation of tens of thousands of the Japanese began.

He took meticulous care that I could safely return to Japan. He issued me the pass I needed to travel in north Korea and even took necessary steps for my going through the state boundaries.

After the warmth I received from the young soldier on sentry whom I had met that first time in Pyongyang, and was received by General Kim Il Sung and, in addition, that such a great thing as the repatriation of my compatriots was achieved, I became an ardent supporter of President Kim Il Sung and the Korean people, going beyond any ideology and creed.

Afterwards, in 1968, when the Democratic People's Republic of Korea reached the 20th anniversary of its founding, I told a Korean reporter resident in Japan how I came to meet General Kim Il Sung. He recommended me to visit Korea again. And in 1972 I won the official commendation of Foreign Minister Fukuda for my distinguished services in the repatriation movement. I decided to visit north Korea without fail at any available opportunity and meet President Kim Il Sung, the young soldier and the secretary to express my thanks to them and do something in return for the favours I had received in Korea.

In 1982 I resigned from the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fishery, where I had served for a long time, and joined the Mitsubishi Building Company. Taking advantage of my having become a free civilian, I informed the General Association of Korean Residents in Japan (Chongryon), of my desire to visit Korea at any cost. On April 28, 1987 I set out with my wife, for my second visit to Korea.

The Korean officials were very cordial and treated me as an honoured guest because I had met General Kim Il Sung in 1946.

I was in a high state of emotion, my heart was full. The Republic welcomed me hospitably and I could exchange opinions with the cadres without reserve.

On learning that I was a technician of agricultural civil engineering, Vice-President Ri Jong Ok made the suggestion for us to develop technical exchange in this sphere.

After coming home I visited the people concerned of the Liberal Democratic Party, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fishery, the Ministry of Construction and others and

tried to promote the technical exchange between Japan and Korea.

However, as it was a matter concerning the Republic with which we had no diplomatic relations, my negotiations did not go smoothly; I encountered many difficulties and passed through twists and turns. However, thanks to the efforts of those concerned, a technical exchange could be steadily developed through dispatching to the Republic Honorary Professor Tanaka of Kyushu University, who is an authority on reclamation of tideland and Civil Engineer Takuwa, who has rich experience in the building of airports.

In May 1990, before visiting Korea for the third time, together with the above-mentioned two men, I had the fortune to meet Mr. Kanemaru Shin, former deputy premier, through the introduction of a member of the House of Councilors, a former schoolmate of mine.

Mr. Kanemaru encouraged me, saying: "I intend to visit Korea with Mr. Tanabe of the Socialist Party and will try hard to restore diplomatic relations, and settle the case of the ship *Fujisan-maru,* so I hope that if you go to north Korea, you will do your best to realize them by regarding yourself as an advance party...." In Korea I proposed to the leading officials of the Korean Government that they receive a Kanemaru-led party on a visit to Korea during the intervals of technical exchange or at any other opportunity.

One feels pleased that history is made in any age by the efforts of men of great ambition.

As a result, the publication of the joint declaration of the three parties of Japan and Korea, the negotiations between the governments for normalizing relations between Japan and Korea began to be carried out in full scale. I think that the most delightful thing was that the work was transferred to the officials of the state or the government from that of our private civilians.

Love Shown to Even the Children in South Korea

Hatanaka Chikako, Wife of the
Late Mr. Hatanaka Masaharu,
Former Chief Director of the
Japan-Korea Society

Reception Day–May 15, 1969

Whenever I see apricot and apple blossoms in full bloom in the yard of my house I look back wistfully upon the days I spent in Korea.

It seemed to me that the bouquet made up of dilatata Nak., red roses and common garden canna that a pretty little girl handed to me when I landed at the Pyongyang Airport emitted such a sweet smell.

In May 1969 I visited the DPRK with my husband (Hatanaka Masaharu, Chief Director of the Japan-Korea Society) who had received an invitation from the Korean Society for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries.

The country of Juche which I saw for the first time seemed to be a paradise of people.

I thought that an intense and noisy situation would be prevailing there because it was right after the incident of the shooting down of the US espionage airplane (the *EC-121* incident on April 15, 1969), but everything surprised me–the workers who walk the quiet streets, full of vigor, the women who talk happily in colorful *chima* (skirt) and *jogori* (coat).

So mellow are the green willows and wild flowers,
The streets of Pyongyang are too quiet.

I wrote these lines down in my notebook. The quietness of the streets was manifested also in the behaviour of the people. Who could imagine that the Korean people, who had fought a fierce war against the United States and had heroically risen from the terrible ruins of war,

are as quiet as this? How can they be so self-possessed and calm when the US imperialist manoeuvrings to provoke a new war are still continuing?

As the days passed, I gradually came to realize the reason. The Korean people are mentally prepared so that they never waver even if any great incident occurs; they are full of confidence that only when they follow the instructions of President Kim Il Sung and do as he says victory is in store for them. This bespeaks that the Korean people move as one man around him.

During my stay in Korea I visited his native home in Mangyongdae. There was a hill there, which commanded a view of Pyongyang. There I was able to recognize the greatness of President Kim Il Sung's leadership, who had built up Pyongyang, totally destroyed by the war against US imperialism, into a beautiful city where so many multistory apartment houses rose. Moreover, I could form a general idea of the great leadership of President Kim Il Sung who had relieved the country from the colonial domination of Japan and had built today's socialist Korea. I wrote my innermost feelings in the record of impressions:

In Mangyongdae I take a view of the boundless
expanse of Pyongyang,
What a great might President Kim Il Sung has!

I met him and was able to discern his noble personality–the person who is always among the people.

In his presence–he is well-built, dignified yet not stern and always talks smiling softly–I felt intuitively that he is a person who can be entrusted with the destiny of the country and is followed by the people without hesitation.

I understood that his affection for the people was very deep.

I felt very guilty and was abashed, seeing the leader of the country kindly coming in front of the lift and receiving us so warmly.

The President spoke intelligibly yet logically and quietly, and his beaming face clouded at times when he talked about south Korea.

While staying in Korea, I received a particularly deep impression of the happy life of the children and women.

Children are the most precious treasures in Korea. The best things

are given to children before anyone else and the younger generation is brought up at the expense of the state without any inconveniences.

The interpreter boasted to me: "The largest and most magnificent building in the street is the palace built by President Kim Il Sung for the children." As he had said, I was soon able to find the most magnificent building in Pyongyang. There is a 10-storey Students and Children's Palace on a low hill in the centre of Pyongyang. The Pyongyang Students and Children's Palace, whose floorage covers an area of 50,000 square metres, has more than 500 rooms in addition to the theatre, amusement room, gymnasium, library, and others. It is arranged in a way that daily over 10,000 children can conduct their favourite extra-curricular activities to their heart's content. Needless to say, the state bears all the expense.

When I saw the children learning and playing so heartily, the miserable children in south Korea, about whom I had read in *Yun Bok's Diary,* flashed through my mind.

I thought that President Kim Il Sung's face had clouded on their account too and on the feelings of the mothers in south Korea who were unable to do anything for their children.

I wish that the US army would withdraw from south Korea and that Korea would be reunified as soon as possible so that the children in south Korea could enjoy happiness in the embrace of the President.

I intend that as soon as that comes true, I will travel from Pusan to Pyongyang.

At the same time, I want to see the benevolent looks of the President again without fail.

I Was Impressed by His Deep Faith

Nishitani Yoshio, Director of
the Miraisha Publishing House

Reception Day–June 23, 1970

On June 2, 1970 we visited the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (hereafter abbreviated to the Republic) for the first time at its invitation. It was only this time that we were simply visiting it.

In connection with our visit, lasting over a month until the 4th of July, a number of our impressions have already been given and published under the title *In Celebration of the 60th Birthday of Premier Kim Il Sung.* They were not sold to any readers but were contributed to President Kim Il Sung and the persons concerned.

Among them *The Interview with Premier Kim Il Sung* (in those days he was the Premier) was about 80 pages long, and when I re-read it now, I cannot add anything more, because I only interviewed him once. So, with the consent of the editorial board I condensed it into 30 pages, supplemented it a little and thus fulfilled a request to write. I hope the reader will understand.

The appellation of President Kim Il Sung, which appears hereinafter in the accounts of the interview is according to the one used in those days.

Our deluxe car, a Russian-made *Zim,* arrived at the Cabinet building at 5:30 sharp in the afternoon of the 23rd of June. We were directed to a lift. An indescribable fragrance filled it. Its floor which seemed to have an area of about a *phyong* was covered with a scarlet carpet, and there was a low chair covered with white cloth in the centre. A telephone was set up in a corner. This made me feel very strange.

In an instant it seemed the lift stopped and the door opened. It was as if all this had happened in a few seconds and I was on the third floor or thereabouts. The moment I walked out of the door I saw Premier Kim Il Sung standing there, a bright smile on his face. This really surprised me. It was an unheard-of thing. We were very embarrassed.

The Premier held out his hand and grasped our hands firmly. I also saw the strained familiar faces of Mr. Kim Kwan Sop, acting Chairman of the Society for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries, and Mrs. Ri Jong Sun, Vice-Chairman of the Democratic Women's Union. The Premier introduced us to a secretary, a rather short one, who stood there beside him. At the time we thought, in our Japanese way, that he was his secretary. Later, after returning to our quarters, we asked the interpreter and learned that he was Mr. Kim Jung Rin, Secretary of the Central Committee of the Workers' Party of Korea.

The Premier urged the members of the team of photographers who were already waiting to quickly take a souvenir photograph. I would be able to look at his dignified figure and smiling face, which I had often seen in photographs. How much I had waited for and wanted this moment. Thinking back, after we had received the invitation of the Republic and arrived at Pyongyang, we had waited for this moment tensely. And now our wish had come true. It might be said that all my desires were fulfilled when I simply met and shook hands with him. It was a really dramatic moment.

After a while, we were shown into the reception room. It was a wide, bright room, with an area as wide as about 100 *tadami* mats. His reception began there.

The Premier showed no formality towards us, producing a pack of cigarettes, and asking us to smoke. I was embarrassed, thinking that I should smoke or not. I felt sorry that I would smoke the cigarette which he offered me. And then I thought of how the Chongryon officials would be pleased if I brought it to Japan and gave it to them with the words that it was given to me by the Premier. However, I decided to smoke it. I cannot remember what sort of cigarette it was. I thought that perhaps it was a "Yonggwang", which I used to smoke in my quarters, but I cannot remember its taste. Probably, this was because I was so tense. I wanted to receive a pack of cigarettes from him to give as a gift to Chongryon, but I completely forgot about it as he began to speak. On thinking of it, even now, I feel a great regret. The Premier often offered me sweets at the table but I couldn't touch them because I was so excited.

I would like to repeat the words he uttered at the reception minutely and as accurately as possible. This is primarily because I want to leave a record of the reception that day which became a historic event for me.

In addition, I'm desirous, needless to say, of informing as many people as possible and the ruling circles of Japan of the Republic and of his personality. There may be slips of memory and also in the order of his talks. I want the reader to understand this.

The Premier began to speak immediately after taking his seat:

"I was told that you intend to go home by way of Nakhodka tomorrow, but how about returning after staying for another week? If you go home by way of Nakhodka, you have to cover a longer distance and that's inconvenient for you. It's better to go by air via Moscow. This is by far more convenient."

The Premier often said something to Kim Kwan Sop. We thought that probably he was listening to the opinion of the vice-chairman, who had invited us, or was giving him directives. Whenever he spoke to him, he would stand up with a tense look and reply something. It was impressive. Because their talks were not interpreted, we could not know their import but it seemed to me that they discussed the question of the postponement of our departure. We were greatly embarrassed and surprised when he uttered quite unexpected words. On the other hand, I thought that we should not accept them, because he had spoken them out of courtesy.

"I thank you very much for your kindness. However, we would like to go home tomorrow, according to plan, with the deep emotion we felt at your reception, because we were ready to return to our country."

Appreciating his kindness, I thus told him about our unavoidable circumstances.

The Premier said:

"In fact, I intended to meet you earlier but I could not spare time because, as you know, His Majesty Sihanouk and his wife are on a visit to our country, and other foreign guests visit us successively. So, my meeting with you has been delayed like this. I really feel sorry. Han Tok Su, Chairman of Chongryon, asked me to meet you, and I intended to do so without fail. His Majesty Sihanouk is my old comrade-in-arms and a close friend. He is now suffering a great misfortune. That means we must comfort and encourage him. So, that is why I often travel together with him. We have just finished a journey now."(Later, news was carried in a newspaper that the Premier stayed in Wonsan with His Majesty Sihanouk and his wife for several days after an interval of some years

and returned to Pyongyang at 4 p.m. that day.) "My wife told me that the wife of His Majesty had once said that it is a rule that if one is in favourable circumstances, his friends and inferiors or others obey him implicitly, but, if he is in adversity, some do not obey him and that those who follow him invariably when he is in adversity are his true friends. And that she expressed her heartfelt thanks for our sincere entertainment when they were in adverse circumstances. We have only met our obligations as their friends."

This clearly shows the personality of the Premier's strong sense of faith. I was deeply moved thinking of the bitter experience I had faced several years before. It is a really beautiful and graceful consideration for others which cannot be seen in the world of tradespeople, where might is right, and the human society where people are coldhearted. I seemed to see the real features of the man in the disinterested remarks of the Premier.

He gave a detailed description of the political and military intricacies and serious situation of southeast Asia including Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia, and said that it is necessary and very important for these three countries to strengthen their solidarity, that the Korean people positively support their struggle and give them aid. He stated that the peace of Asia can never be guaranteed if the US imperialists were not driven out of Asia, and that the Asian people themselves had to defend the peace of their continent.

He spoke for about 20 minutes about the reason for the delay of his meeting with us and about His Majesty Sihanouk and the situation of the three countries of southeast Asia.

Why does Premier Kim Il Sung, who is a distinguished leader commanding the absolute respect and confidence of the Korean people, give such full particulars about them to ordinary civilians like us? He must be working under the heaviest of pressure. The fact that he was receiving us was enough to deeply move our hearts. In addition, he gave us such heartfelt talks that it made us feel quite awkward. What's more, these talks were right at the beginning of his reception. Can there be another premier or leader who is so sincere and full of humanity as he in any other country?

I marvelled at his ringing voice. Where did such a deep, powerful voice come from? When smiling, he looks like an innocent child; he

retains his youthfulness so well that one cannot think of him being 58; and seeing his face alone, one might think he just couldn't possess such a voice! His way of unassumed talking, moving his healthy body from side to side, sometimes rocking backward and forward, and sometimes sinking low into a sofa, as if he had no worries at all, and his art of narration was enough to attract people. His way of behaving was likeable and attractive. On thinking, his voice should have been imbued with the history of the twenty-year-long anti-Japanese armed struggle and the Fatherland Liberation War (Korean war) that broke out immediately after independence, and the ceaseless encouragement he gave to the people and the army in their course. I could not but think this way. Seeing his benign figure I did not perceive from his appearance his being a revolutionary fighter nor his pride as the premier and leader of a country. Indeed, it could be said that he was a leader for the people. I was sure that he did not flaunt his fighting morale, but cherished the spirit outwardly gentle and firm inwardly. The words "the distinguished leader of the revolutionary cause of the world that the 20th century had produced" are often inserted in foreign publications, and I felt that he is worthy of being called that. Premier Kim Il Sung, who is intelligent and thoughtful and has a boundless love for people, brilliant talents and rich experience as a strategist and tactician is, without question, one of the outstanding leaders who are so rare in the world.

He talked concretely, persuasively and wonderfully. I was surprised to see that he spoke without any manuscript or record of materials, citing figures. His powers of memory were really remarkable. He enunciated his words carefully and urged the interpreter on. At this, I thought that he knew the essence of things. The interpreter spoke Japanese masterly. It seemed to me that he well understood the delicate rhetorical flourish of Japanese. His interpretation was almost simultaneous so that the Premier's words were communicated to us without a hitch.

Referring to the various skirmishes with the US and south Korean armies which take place on the land and sea, he said that such skirmishes happened thousands of times in a year, and only the important ones are covered by the press. He added that to his regret defence expenditures were immense today, but when the tension would ease, it would be allocated to construction for the people's benefit.

He changed the subject and stressed that emphasis be put on the education of students and children. When touring many places, we certainly could recognize the great stress laid on education. He said that educational expenses formed a large proportion of the national budget. The fact that this was not exaggeration was actually proved. I think that the huge investment in education represents the crystallization into an educational policy of the Premier's deep solicitude in a farsighted plan to entrust the future of the Republic to the youth and children. I felt this strongly through every word of his brief talks.

In view of the military tension created in the Republic, it is natural that it implements the policy of concurrently developing the economy and defences while giving priority to heavy industry. Nevertheless, it appropriates a huge amount of money for educational and other cultural facilities. We felt both wonder and admiration at this.

"We now lay stress on the light industry so that people could live in plenty. It can be said that heavy industry has come up to the level of the advanced countries, but the people are not well off yet. That is why we now emphasize the light industry as well as the heavy industry. In our country luxury items are limited but common goods are gradually becoming plentiful, to say nothing of the necessities. Nearly everything can today be produced in our country. If one wants a car, one can afford it, but circumstances do not permit. We must practise patience because the military tension continues, national reunification has not been achieved and the south Korean people are still suffering. We must share our happiness even a little with them. So, we persuade the people to have patience for the time being."

The Premier spoke passionately about the question of north-south reunification.

"So far, we have made frequent proposals to the south Korean people and the Pak Jong Hui clique to reunify the north and the south. We do not intend to found a people's republic or socialist state immediately. We maintained establishing a north-south confederal system leaving the present political systems untouched or reducing the armies to 100,000 men and even less in order to ease the military tension in case they cannot accept it. But the Pak Jong Hui clique rejected it. In addition, we suggested that we start economic interchange at least for mutual benefits because ours is an industrial country while south Korea

is an agricultural one. But it was also rejected. Then we proposed to them to realize correspondence at least and travel between parents, brothers and sisters, but they refused this, too. All of our humanistic proposals were turned down. Today, whatever proposals we make, they only say 'no'. They have proposed to conduct a north-south general election under the surveillance of the UN and, on this basis, decide the future of Korea but we can never accept that. This is because our Korean people are able to decide their destiny for themselves. There is no need at all to depend on foreign countries. The Pak Jong Hui puppet regime speaks vehemently that it will annihilate the members of our Workers' Party. But, that is impossible. In the final analysis, north-south reunification is absolutely impossible if the US army remains in south Korea. As long as the US army is stationed in south Korea, a fair, free and democratic election is impossible. So, we strongly demand the withdrawal of the US army from south Korea. The Geneva Agreement pointed out that the reunification of north-south Korea should be realized on the principle of self-determination of the peoples but the United States obstructs our national reunification. The reunification of north-south Korea is the earnest wish of our Korean people and they will not tolerate the obstructive manoeuvrings of the United States.

"The Pak Jong Hui puppet regime in south Korea has often set a false rumour afloat that we want to reunify north-south Korea by force of arms. Just think that over. The destiny of south Korea should be determined by the south Korean people themselves. No matter how much we may endeavour to reunify by force of arms that would be absolutely impossible without receiving their support. Only a fool will think that once a war is provoked, a south Korean revolution is possible. A south Korean revolution is a question to be solved only by the south Korean people. If the US army withdraws, perhaps the south Korean people will overthrow the Pak Jong Hui puppet regime and establish a democratic government even on the next day. Because we know of how they suffer, it is only natural that we assist them."

The Premier emphatically told us that the supreme desire of the entire Korean people is the reunification of the north and the south. It is clear that the genuine independence and peace of the Korean people cannot be ensured without the reunification of the country.

According to data, the Republic has so far put forward many definite

proposals for the reunification of the north and the south and there were, at least, several opportunities to put them into practice.

The leader went on to say: "We are going to hold the Fifth Congress of the Workers' Party of Korea in October. There are many tasks to be discussed there but an important one among them is to narrow down the differences between town and country and between the worker and farmer. The workers in town have an 8-hour workday, but the farmers still have a long way to go, before reaching that stage. So, it's necessary to mechanize the rural areas as quickly as possible in order to shorten the working hours of the farmers. And it is our important task to narrow down the differences between the workers and farmers as soon as we can. Our per-unit-area yields are low, compared with those in the rural areas of Japan, and in making cultivated land large-scale there are many things which we should learn from Japan.

"Another important question is that although the question of equality for the sexes through equal pay for work of equal value has been settled, equal rights of the man and woman in household chores are not guaranteed yet. In addition to working in their posts, women have to do the household chores. Careful consideration must be given to relieve them of housework. Rice cookery, laundries, etc., should be set up on a large scale to alleviate their burden and materially to guarantee equal rights for both sexes. Needless to say, we have many problems to solve but those two questions are most important tasks for us.

"Please have a good rest, stay a week longer. Relax. Have a good rest. If you return to Japan, more claims will press on you. Opportunely, a large mass meeting (a mass rally for the withdrawal of the US army from south Korea–a rally commemorating the 20th anniversary of the start of the Korean war) will be held in Pyongyang the day after tomorrow. It would be good for you to see it. But here you will not be arrested by the police of Japan. I heard that you have prearranged to go home by way of Nakhodka tomorrow, but if you travel by ship, it's inconvenient and takes too much time. If you go by way of Moscow, after staying a week longer, you'll arrive in your country at almost the same time as is going tomorrow. If you go by air, it would be convenient and you could make better time. Please put off your return for a week, and then go home leisurely."

The reception, which had lasted for one and a half hours, neared its

end. I set myself to lightly argue with the Premier, who had mentioned more than once that we could make better time by going home through Moscow.

"The Premier said that if we go via Moscow, it would be convenient and we could make better time, but I don't think so. In fact, our coming to Pyongyang took several days. It's not convenient at all. If we went straight by air, it would take two hours. We heartily wish that the national reunification will be achieved as soon as possible and we will be able then to come here in two hours."

I said this, not giving a thought to the incident of *Yodo-go.* I said it unintentionally because at the banquets the expression "the near yet distant country" was often used so far.

The Premier readily assented and unexpectedly spoke about the *Yodo-go* incident.

"We have, in fact, been plagued by that incident. It's very difficult for us to treat uninvited guests. When the incident occurred, I was out in a rural village near Pyongyang. I was informed on the spot about it by telephone. I was told that a Japanese vice-minister called Yamamura was among them and had become terror-stricken. I was asked to give instructions on how to deal with them. We never detain those who want to go back. Those who want repatriation can freely go home at any time. We took it for granted that the airplane should be sent back because it belongs to the Japanese people, so we returned it. As for the students, they seem to aspire after the Republic, though they are not our invited guests, so we have to respect their will. Because it is clear that if we send them back, the police will immediately arrest and imprison them. We cannot do that. There is no reason at all for our cooperation with the Japanese authorities." (The Premier said that in a confident tone of voice.) "We do not feel a shortage of labour so keenly that we have to make them work, and to our regret we have no prison to put them in." (Smiling, the Premier expressed with such humour the fact that they were neither doing forced labour nor are they in a concentration camp.)

"They must have parents and brothers and sisters. So, they must wait for their return. We want to send them back secretly, to the best of our ability, but it's very difficult for us. Moreover, we once thought of sending them to a foreign country but it's very hard, viewed in the light

of diplomatic relations and international public law. At any rate, it's a tough question and their management is also difficult. It's really a great nuisance to us. But, we cannot neglect them indefinitely so I told the authorities concerned to examine the best method for the time being."

The Premier did not give a detailed account of what they are doing here and called them students, not using the word *Yodo-go* at all. I said to him:

"I'm not a representative of either the Japanese government or any organization. I'm no more than an individual belonging to ordinary Japanese people but I would like to tell you frankly. I express my sincere thanks to you and the Government of the Republic as one of the Japanese people for having dealt with the incident so leniently. At the same time, I deeply apologize to you for having caused such nuisance to your country. The entire Japanese people, including conservative ones, are deeply thankful for your having disposed of the matter so admirably. I'm convinced that through it the Japanese people's understanding of the Republic has been deepened still more."

We were not in a position to ask what the students involved in the incident of *Yodo-go* were doing and where, but were simply full of a sense of gratitude and apology.

The Premier listened attentively to me and said "Thank you" The one and a half hours had passed. The reception ended. He and we rose from our seats almost at the same time.

At this moment, I remembered something. I went up to the interpreter and told him that I had something to give to the Premier.

It seemed to me that the atmosphere in the room became strangely tense. Those present looked worried, fearing lest something should go wrong. But it all happened in a moment.

"This is the 'Himenoshi' made in person by the 92-year-old mother of Mr. Kinoshita Jyunji, an excellent dramatist of Japan who is my good friend, wishing a long life to the Premier. I should very much like to offer this to the Premier. This is something that is imbued with the desire that he live as long as the old mother."

The interpreter seemed to find it hard to understand me. The Premier wore a dubious look and those present looked anxious, thinking that I was complaining to him. Eventually, the interpreter explained to the Premier the origin of the "Himenoshi" admirably as if he saw the

reason why it was offered as a gift. Smiling, the Premier politely expressed his thanks, saying:

"Thank you. Please convey my gratitude to the mother of Mr. Kinoshita.»

Literally, all ended with this. We were unable to repress our excitement and left. Even now, I cannot remember how we entered the lift. I cannot recollect how I exchanged farewells with the Premier.

When we attended a farewell banquet given by the Society for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries in the guest house on the night of that same day, we knew that we were scheduled to go home by way of Moscow. On July 1, the day before our departure, I received a gift through Vice-Chairman Kim Kwan Sop, which the Premier presented to the mother of Kinoshita Jyunji. My admiration at his deep faith was profound.

The Deep Emotion I Felt in a Near Yet Distant Country

Nagasaka Kazuo, Representative Director of the Yuzangaku Publishing Company, Ltd.

Reception Day–June 23, 1970

It was at 10:35 a.m., May 28, 1970 (Thursday). That day the sky over Haneda Airport was clear. Receiving a hearty send-off from the officials concerned of Chongryon, members of the staff of my company and my intimate friends and family, I boarded the airplane *JAL-441* bound for Paris via Moscow, and only when it reached an altitude of 9,000 metres did I release my seat-belt.

A party of three–I, Nishitani, President of the Miraisha Publishing House, and his wife–had set out on a journey at the invitation issued in the name of Kim Kwan Sop, Vice-Chairman of the Society for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (the name of the country is sometimes abbreviated to the Republic).

Our publishing house had published the 3-volume biography of Premier Kim Il Sung (at that time he was Premier) in Japanese, and Miraisha in English respectively, so we had been invited for a visit.

At that time we were to go by way of Moscow and stay there for some days and, moreover, there is the time difference. So, at long last we arrived in Pyongyang at 1:30 p.m., on June 2 (Tuesday). This meant that it took us five days to go to Pyongyang from Tokyo. It was really a journey to a near yet distant country. We spent 30 days in quiet, in palatial quarters in the suburbs of Pyongyang which was called a guest house. We entered and left it by car and whenever we passed the main gate we were stricken with shame on seeing a sentry saluting us.

During our stay there, we accumulated various experiences. We made a field trip, an inspection, a study, and many other undertakings. However, what impressed our hearts most was that, towards the end of our visit, we were luckily received by the great leader Premier Kim Il Sung whom the Korean people revere so much, and which was

our greatest wish. The deep emotion I felt at that time is still vivid in my mind today, although 20 years have passed since then.

Our party was scheduled to leave Pyongyang at 10:10 a.m., June 24, 1970. In the morning of the 23rd, the day before, we were busy trying to prepare for our journey, to write the manuscript of an address to be made at the farewell party, to speak into a microphone of some newspapermen who had asked us to say what we wanted to before our departure, and to sort out our impressions.

Taking lunch, I gave up the idea of meeting Premier Kim Il Sung and said to President of Miraisha, Nishitani: "However popular he is, he still is the Premier of a country...."

Interpreter Mr. Kim had repeatedly told us: "Nothing is scheduled for today, so have a full rest, please." We felt somewhat strange but we stayed in our respective rooms as he told us to do.

Lying down in my room I began thinking of what I should do on my way home or, after returning home, and dozed off. I was awakened by some sounds and Mr. Kim's voice.

"I'll now show you one more important place, so be prepared at five o'clock, please."

He had told us to take a sound nap and was now urging us to prepare ourselves, so we didn't know what's what. I looked at my watch and saw that it was nearly half-past four. We dressed hurriedly. It seemed that we were to be received by Premier Kim Il Sung, judging by the fact that we were told to be in full dress, and grew gradually nervous. It seemed that we would attain our greatest desire, after all.

At 5:30 p.m. sharp our black *Zim* (a deluxe car made in the Soviet Union) arrived in front of the large white Cabinet building. Director Ri and interpreter Kim, with whom we usually rode together, remained in the car. Therefore, the three of us ascended the marble stairs alone and entered the building. Soldiers on both sides presented arms to us as we walked along a red carpet.

We entered a lift that surprised us greatly. It had a red carpet on the floor and splendid sofas were set at its corners. It even had a telephone.

Overwhelmed by this wonderful atmosphere, so full of lovely fragrance, I did not know what floor I was on. I seemed to be on the third floor or upstairs again. The lift halted and the door opened. With a

broad smile on his face, Premier Kim Il Sung, familiar to us from photographs, greeted us, all dressed in white.

He strode over to us as we came out of the lift and offered his hand. I was excited. When I had gotten out of the car a while before, I had mentally prepared myself to behave calmly, but I was lost because I met the Premier so suddenly. I shook hands with him. Even now, I remember the touch of his rather thick, warm palm and the strength of his grasp.

"I am honoured to meet you."

I seemed to have obviously said something similar. Frankly speaking, I couldn't gather my wits soon enough. At this time, Mr. Kim Kwan Sop, Vice-Chairman of the Society for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries, to whom we owed so much for his kindness, Mrs. Ri Jong Sun, Vice-Chairman of the Democratic Women's Union, and a strange man came up the staircases towards us from below. I recovered calmness, probably, because my acquaintances were there among us.

From the beginning, two men had followed the Premier on both sides. Judging from a look in eyes, one of them seemed to be not negligible one who is close to him. The other one was the interpreter and his fluent Japanese was of a high level. His interpretation was almost synchronous. We posed for a souvenir photograph in a lounge with the Premier between us, then walked along a corridor and entered a room on the right. This was the reception room.

In a spacious and luxurious room of about 50 *phyong* chairs were set in the shape of "C" The Premier took a seat at the centre of the front and the rather short, taciturn man (later, we learned that he was Mr. Kim Jung Rin, Secretary of the Central Committee of the Workers' Party of Korea) sat down on his left, and the interpreter on his right.

We sat to the right of the front, namely, on the side of the interpreter in the following order: Mrs. Nishitani, Mr. Nishitani and I. On the left of the front (opposite us), the aforesaid three persons who had come from below sat and Mrs. Ri Jong Sun took the precedence of the others. It seemed that in this country women are respected. When everyone had taken their seats, the Premier got up slowly and came up to us again to modestly offer us cigarettes.

The gentle expression and demeanour of the Premier, who had a kind smile on his face, were enough to relax us, but he was really dignified.

His face was rather dark-coloured and looked very healthy, and whenever he smiled, his white teeth drew our gaze. His hair looked black for his age (he was 58 at that time) and it was thick, so that it made him look young. His sturdy, wide and muscular chest was quite worthy of a veteran military politician. He wore broad-rimmed spectacles and his sparkling eyes behind them were gentle. When he smiled, he looked like a benevolent father, but the glitter in his eyes that became sharp when he touched some important matter or expressed his determination reminded us of the eyes of the veteran general who was once called the tiger on Mt. Paektu.

Our interview with him lasted for about an hour but, beyond the range of the isms and doctrines, I felt the reverence of one who has met a man whose natural beauty charms you totally.

Apart from being a political ideal, he was a person who was really envied in Japan of today, too. When he spoke in a sonorous, loud voice and made smart gestures, he had faultless and first-class sociable and political qualities. Although the interpreter was skilful, we ended our talks with the impression that we had been conversing freely with him.

The Premier enthusiastically talked about politics, the economy, society, education and other matters, and then referred to the *Yodo-go* incident, which was startling news to us at that time, as we would not have heard of it in Japan.

The Premier said that, in fact, the Republic was in a rather awkward position, being forced to deal with the Japanese students, the authors of the incident. He smiled bitterly, saying that he did not feel such a shortage of labour that he would have to make them work forcibly, but that he could not send them back to Japan either and that there was no need to cooperate with the authorities of the country with whom the Republic had no diplomatic relations. He was, therefore, obliged to take them to the hostel of Kim Il Sung University to make them study and that anyway he would have to give them jobs, so that for him they were rather nerve-racking. At that time this was a thrilling episode to be known in Japan.

Presently, Premier Kim Il Sung took the glass of red wine brought by the waiter, together with those present, and wished us success in our work and good health. Then he heard that we planned to start, next day, for Nakhodka through Siberia by train and then go home by ship.

He said that it would make us very tired and that he would take measures for us to go home by way of Moscow by air; he then invited us again to stay a week more and attend the function commemorating the June 25 Korean war before returning. So we decided to do as he said. Thanks to him, we were able to directly witness the deep-seated reverence people had for President Kim Il Sung and their intense loyalty at the June 25 commemoration function. We took pictures of it with 8mm film for remembrance, and did our shopping in Moscow.

Our party arrived at Haneda Airport at 11:45 a.m., July 4, 1970, with the gifts presented by Premier Kim Il Sung and the DPRK. Indeed, it was a journey to a "near yet distant country", which had lasted for 38 days.

The Most Distinguished People's Leader

Narita Tomomi, Ex-Chairman of
the Japan Socialist Party

Reception Day–August 22, 1970

While holding the office of Chairman of the Japan Socialist Party I visited the DPRK twice, leading its delegations.

Each time I was given a significant opportunity to be received by President Kim Il Sung, who created the Juche idea and has been confidently leading the Korean people to victory and happiness.

While visiting the Republic twice, I was able to meet the President more often, but his reception of the delegation of the Japan Socialist Party on August 22, 1970 and on September 6, 1974 was particularly significant.

Apart from official interviews, meeting him on various occasions, I received a very deep impression of him. That still remains vivid in my mind.

When we visited the DPRK for the first time, we travelled by way of a third country, such as the Soviet Union or China, because there were no diplomatic relations between the two countries. But we thought that it was etiquette for the delegation of the party, which officially visits a country, to go direct rather than by way of a foreign country.

So, in conditions where there were neither a liner nor an airliner to the Republic, we arrived at Hamhung by cargo ship. Then we made for Pyongyang.

Although I had heard much about Pyongyang being a beautiful city, I could not but admire its beauty when seeing it with my own eyes.

An accompanying Japanese reporter wondered, saying: "I've never thought that Pyongyang is such a magnificent city. It's really a beautiful city, ranking among the five famous cities in the world."

We met President Kim Il Sung, the beloved leader of the Korean people, in the Cabinet building (at that time) in the heart of beautiful Pyongyang.

I remember that we were received in his office twice.

At the first reception I experienced something I never thought.

After our car left the guest house, where our quarters were, and arrived at the Cabinet building, speeding along the beautiful streets of Pyongyang, we immediately went up to the place for the reception by a lift.

I thought that the President would be waiting for us, working in his office.

However, when the door of the lift opened, he was standing in front of it.

Despite the numerous claims on him, he had waited for the arrival of our delegation in front of the lift to greet us.

I felt guilty at that moment. At the same time, I felt that I had been physically embraced by the benevolent President.

With a smile, he squeezed our hands, one by one. At that time, I got the impression that he was very young and healthy.

He not only received us. He also held a luncheon for us, and sat with us for a long time. During this significant meeting I had valuable talks with him on various problems.

Having travelled to many countries of the world, I had met quite a number of heads of state but I felt that President Kim Il Sung was the most distinguished one.

He was honest and broad-minded.

He told me frankly what he had in mind without sticking to formality, and his every word was full of confidence and faith. I received a very great impression of him, indeed.

Usually, those who are full of self-confidence assume an overbearing attitude and tend to become haughty and talk superficially, regardless of what other people think. It is needless to say that those are not so full of self-confidence, in the true sense of the word.

But President Kim Il Sung was very modest, thoughtful and frank.

Talking with us, he neither spoke superficially nor interrupted another man as can so often be seen among politicians of foreign countries. He spoke in detail about necessary issues while giving us time to speak and to give our opinions. He thus made us listen attentively to his words. I think that it is this genuine self-confidence and confidence in his line that underlies his broad-minded and unconventional personality.

Later, one day when our schedule of the second visit to the Republic

was almost completed, President Kim Il Sung, though very busy, came to our quarters and took me along in his car, saying that he wanted to go to Onchon and have lunch with me there.

In the car he said that he seemed to have told us much, but seeing as it took two hours and a half to get to Onchon, he would like to hear a lot from me also. Thus he gave me an opportunity to tell him all about various questions.

When we arrived at Onchon and sat down to eat, he looked around at the company, at once, creating a warm atmosphere with the words that he wanted to drop all formal compliments and have a talk, while taking our meal.

I and all the other members of our delegation had never met with anything of the like before, so we were particularly impressed.

When I looked at the President, who has such an unconventional and benign personality, the prejudices I had had so far deep in my mind dissolved entirely.

In the period of the Japanese imperialist rule when we were young, we had read articles in Japanese newspapers entitled "Kim Il Sung, the Tiger on Mt. Paektu, Made Frequent Appearances", and often heard that sort of story.

Of course, these were an expression of the imperialists, who were embarrassed by the dauntless and courageous activities of General Kim Il Sung, the anti-Japanese brilliant commander, who punished the Japanese army and police by his elusive tactics. However, there were not a few among our Japanese people who associated "the tiger on Mt. Paektu" with a hero whom ordinary people could not approach.

Frankly speaking, I thought so, too.

As it was a prejudice imbibed by the imperialists, it could not last long. Although later, I was told much about the personality and virtue of the President, I could not get rid of that prejudice which I had harboured since youth, until I met him personally.

However, when I met the President, who was so affectionate and was so free and easy, the prejudice was vanished and I came to cherish a deep respect for him.

In addition, President Kim Il Sung was a great man who had a keen insight into things and good judgement of them, magnanimity, sound logic and strong persuasive power which touches the right cord in people.

He already had made public many of his works. They are all textbooks on the struggle by which all revolutionaries, to say nothing of me, should be guided.

In particular, in his work *On the Question of the Transition from Capitalism to Socialism and the Dictatorship of the Proletariat* he gave an original and scientific solution to the question of the period of transition and the dictatorship of the proletariat and dealt a blow to various opportunist reactionary views.

At the same time, in the work *Theses on the Socialist Rural Question in Our Country* he not only scientifically clarified the way for the solution of the rural question, which was urgent, but also solved this difficult question, based on the theses, in Korea for the first time. This, indeed, is admirable.

Through some of these facts alone, one can clearly understand that President Kim Il Sung is not only a great practician but also a distinguished politician and theorist.

I read almost all the major works of the President. Therefore, I had known that he has a profound theoretical knowledge of all fields of revolution and construction, but, hearing his words directly I could not repress my admiration at his political and theoretical intelligence.

Although I cannot give particular details here, I wondered that he was able to analyze the international problems and real conditions of Japan so concretely, coolly and deeply and to divine the essence of all the problems.

Through our interview with the President, our observation in various places of the Republic and our own experiences, we came to understand in reality that he is not only a distinguished thinker and theoretician but also the people's great leader and benign father who has a great affection for them.

He maintains a fundamental standpoint on which he always finds himself among the masses, works relying on them, thinks on a basis of their viewpoint, represents their interests and reflects their will in the policy. In this sense, he is a great leader.

I think that one of his characteristics is to penetrate into the masses personally.

To cite an instance, I was told that he gave field-guidance to famous Chongsan-ri on scores of occasions. I was deeply moved to hear that

he always goes among the people though his schedule is so tight.

And he listens to the people and gives specific guidance in conformity with some actual situation instead of a general one.

There was a thing I heard once when I was at a mass performance.

It seems to me that it was in Nampho.

He had given guidance to it on the spot a few years before, when a woman farmer had told him that maize was a suitable crop there. She had already advanced such an opinion to many institutions frequently, but she regretted that it was ignored.

The President acquainted himself with the actual conditions and thought that she was right. He took the necessary measures on the spot. With the result that her farm had a bumper crop of maize.

It happened that we saw a drama at his invitation together.

When the performance ended, the President met the hero and the other actors and producers and shook their hands warmly, thanking them for their trouble and congratulating them on their successful performance; then he told them in detail how they could correct their shortcomings.

As I learned later, the artists in Korea receive this kind of guidance from the President everywhere and at all times. Not all leaders can give and display such meticulous solicitude and tangible guidance.

I was deeply moved by this fact.

Such great consideration and warm solicitude were also shown to the Japanese reporters accompanying our delegation by the President.

They ardently wanted to interview the President but gave up the idea because they were sure that time pressed heavily on him as he administered state affairs.

One day, he visited our quarters by the Taedong River. He saw me and the reporters greeting him in the hall. He knew that they had requested an interview with him and was sorry not to have met their wish, but he wanted to have that interview right there. With this, he made time for them and talked with them for about 20 minutes.

Usually, in a case like this, if the head of state once declines an interview, that's the end of it. However, he had not forgotten their request and when he met them, he apologized for his failing to receive them, and then, departing from precedent, gave the interview.

Really, this was a display of utmost solicitude.

At this, I and the other members of the delegation, to say nothing of the reporters, could not repress our emotions.

On our way home by ship, after our visit to the Republic had ended, our ship encountered a violent storm, and returned to the Republic. We waited for the storm to subside in a hotel in Hungnam. But, unexpectedly, President Kim Il Sung learned about it, and made a long-distance call to us.

He told us warmly that it would be inconvenient for us in the hotel so that it would be better to return to the quarters we had in Pyongyang and wait, while resting.

We were quite overwhelmed and refused out of politeness, but after all we did return to the quarters in Pyongyang as he said. His warm solicitude made our eyes water.

Indeed, President Kim Il Sung is a benevolent leader who is a very humane person.

I met him and felt his greatness deeply.

President Kim Il Sung, the beloved leader of the Korean people, led a heroic anti-Japanese revolutionary struggle for a long time and liberated Korea from the Japanese imperialist yoke. After liberation he annihilated the US aggressor army, who boasted of its being the "strongest" in the world, and lifted heroic Korea to world fame, while also wisely leading the nation-building and socialist construction of a new Korea. Thus, he performed such significant services that will go down in history for all time.

As is known, the US imperialists, who had reduced Korea to ashes at the time of the Korean war, babbled that "Korea will not rise again in a hundred years".

However, under the wise leadership of President Kim Il Sung, the Korean people rose as a phoenix and attained miraculous achievements.

What struck us with such wonder, among others, was that the Korean people had successfully carried out the complicated and difficult tasks of industrialization in the short period of 14 years, which took capitalism a whole century, or several centuries, to accomplish.

Moreover, the northern half of the Republic, which in the past was pronounced as being impossible of developing agriculture, solved the food problem and attained self-sufficiency in grain.

At the same time, it was said that there was not a single tree left in the mountains of Korea because of the reckless deforestation by the Japanese imperialists in the past; today, however, all the mountains are covered with rich greenery and present a superb scenic beauty to the eye.

People are leading a happy life in a modern house, built at the expense of the state, without worry about food, or clothing, receiving medical treatment free of charge if they become ill, and their children studying at free schools.

All these facts, which make people marvel, show that the Juche idea of President Kim Il Sung is being thoroughly implemented. These are nothing but a marvel which could be wrought only by the great Juche idea and the intelligent leadership of the President.

Those miraculous achievements were made by his Juche philosophy and granite line that is its foundation, his political greatness and deep affection for the people.

Like this, thanks to the distinguished leadership of the President, the Korean revolution could advance straight along the only road to victory without the slightest deviation.

So, the Korean people follow him to the last moment of their lives, deeply respecting and trusting him as their great leader. This is only natural.

Such a great and distinguished politician and leader does not exist in Japan.

I believe that the Korean people are really happy with such a great leader, the distinguished leader of the people–President Kim Il Sung.

* * *

The present era is an era of independence.

The people of all countries of the world are rejecting all class exploitation and national oppression and are waging an independent and creative struggle. The case of the Japanese people is no exception.

I firmly believe that the Korean people, who consistently adhere to the Juche idea created by the President and put spurs to the revolution and construction under his wise guidance, will achieve just as brilliant successes in the future as they did in the past.

Today, the situation in relation to the question of the reunification of Korea will move as he said it would.

History has its own current and no one can reverse it.

According to the law governing historical development, to his correct policy for reunification in particular, Korea will surely be reunified.

In conclusion, I sincerely wish the beloved leader of the Korean people President Kim Il Sung a long life and hope that, under the guidance of the great leader, the DPRK will prosper forever with its blue rivers and mountains which were engraved on my memory.

President Kim Il Sung and the Late Chairman Narita Tomomi

Takazawa Torao, Member of the
House of Representatives

Reception Day–August 22, 1970

I met President Kim Il Sung in August 1970 for the first time. It was my first Korean visit. Since then 21 years have passed and now the President will meet his 80th birthday. I feel all the more keenly that time flies, and sincerely wish him a long life in good health.

In August 1970, the delegation of the Japan Socialist Party led by Chairman Narita visited Korea. I was a member of it. At that time, in visiting the land of Juche, we decided to go straight to Korea from Japan by ship instead of going by way of the Soviet Union or China. To be concrete, we boarded a 500-ton cargo ship called *Tokai-maru* at Saganoseki in Oida Prefecture, arrived at the Port of Hungnam, a large industrial district of Korea, and from there went on to Pyongyang. Through this delegation the door to interchange and solidarity between the Japan Socialist Party and the Workers' Party of Korea was opened.

In the talks between the delegation led by Narita, and the Korean delegation led by Vice-President Pak Song Chol, various questions including the situation in Asia and the relations between Japan and Korea were discussed as well as the question on the revival of Japanese militarism occupied a large proportion in the discussion.

At that time, the Japanese Cabinet was the Sato Cabinet. Premier Sato visited the United States in November 1969 and published the "Japan-US Joint Statement" with President Nixson. The statement appraised the role of the US army highly for the peace and security of the Far East and stressed that "the security of the Republic of Korea is essential to the security of Japan itself" and "the maintenance of peace and security of the Taiwan area, too, is very important for the security of Japan" This was nothing else than saying that in case a war breaks out

in the Korean peninsula or on Taiwan Japan will participate in it together with the United States.

In addition, in June 1970 the 10-year term of the "Japan-US Security Treaty", which was revised in 1960 in the teeth of a violent mass struggle against it, expired. The treaty was termed in such a way that if fresh steps necessary to denounce it were not taken, it was automatically renewed for an indefinite period.

In line with this, under the plausible name of "independent defence", the Sato Cabinet openly embarked on the road of strengthening their military power.

Bearing this process in mind, the Korean side maintained that Japanese imperialism had already revived. The Narita-led delegation, on the contrary, asserted that though it was a fact that the ruling circles of Japan had the intention of reviving militarism and were promoting a policy for it, we could not conclude yet that it had been revived. This was because if we had come to such a conclusion, an important change would have to be made in the stance of the struggle of the Japanese democratic forces. Our controversy became heated at times but, after all, it ended by mutual agreement on using the expression that "We fight against the danger of reviving Japanese militarism".

About the time when the draft of a joint statement of the Japan Socialist Party and the Workers' Party of Korea was being prepared, we were received by President Kim Il Sung in the guest house at a lakeside among the mountains.

I had the impression of his being a very gentle man. His stature was considerably great but I could not sense it because of his sturdy physique. There seemed to be a smile on his face always, and I felt the softness and warmth of his palm when I shook hands with him.

My second impression was that he appeared dignified. His voice gave me that impression. He possessed a husky voice, the kind I had never heard anyone whom I have met so far speak.

In talks with the President, it became clear that Chairman Narita and the President were born in the same year (1912). The latter was born on April 15 and the former on September 15. I believe that this fact made for a feeling of intimacy and friendliness between the Japan Socialist Party and the Workers' Party of Korea.

The President was a great talker. Properly speaking, it is right to say

that he is eloquent, but as I heard him only through an interpreter, I use the expression that he is talkative. The President used very many words, gesturing and making signs. He had a remarkable flow of ideas and words.

He referred to the question of nuclear weapons. The year 1970 was the year before the city government of Okinawa was returned to Japan by the United States and, at that time, whether nuclear weapons, too, are transferred or not was the greatest point of dispute in Japan. The President said:

"The nuclear weapons of the United States are deployed in the southern half of our country and are aimed at us. However, the nuclear weapons of the Soviet Union or China are not deployed in our country. Moreover, if one asks us if we are going to make them, we will reply that we have neither the will nor the ability to do so. Anyhow, nuclear weapons cannot be developed if nuclear explosions are not tested. However, in our small country there is no place where nuclear tests can be made."

Indeed, this is a lucid explanation. I am convinced that his will not to make, not to possess or not to import nuclear weapons remains the same up to the present. The negotiations between the governments for normalizing diplomatic relations between Japan and Korea are still proceeding today. The Japanese government is menacingly trying to force the Korean side to undergo nuclear inspection of the International Atomic Energy Agency.

However, the Japanese government has never advanced any opinion to the United States or south Korea on the fact that about 1,000 nuclear weapons of the United States are deployed in south Korea and that they are aimed at north Korea. Moreover, the Japanese government does not breathe a word and pretends not to know that, running counter to the national policy of the three denuclearization principles, the nuclear weapons of the United States freely enter and leave Japan and are aimed at north Korea and at other socialist countries. I think that the Japanese government should inspect the loading of nuclear weapons on the warships, the vessels and airplanes of the United States which come in and out of Japan, instead of urging north Korea to undergo an inspection by the IAEA.

It was prearranged that the Narita-led delegation will leave for home

by the ship *Tokai-maru.* We, therefore, went to Chongjin from Pyongyang by a special airplane.

When we left Chongjin and sailed down along the east coast of the Korean peninsula, the waves grew gradually higher. The captain said that a typhoon was approaching. It was due to his judgement and decision that the ship took shelter at the Hungnam Port to wait for the storm to pass. The 500-ton *Tokai-maru* pitched heavily. After the members of the delegation had risen from the tables one by one and returned to their cabins to sleep, the leader Narita and I stayed on drinking and conversing for a long time, pressing a cup with the left hand and a bottle of beer with the right one to our table to keep them from falling off. Needless to say, the central topic of our conversation was our impressions of President Kim Il Sung.

It seemed that Chairman Narita, who had served as an excellent office employee at the Mitsui financial group up to the end of the Second World War and had entered politics only after the war, was deeply impressed by the gentle, calm and composed demeanour of the President, who had gone through the fire of war and revolution and today stands at the forefront of the confrontation with US imperialism and Japanese militarism as the leader of the DPRK. Undoubtedly the chairman was filled with deep emotion in particular, because he was of the same age.

In December 1972, two years afterwards, I was a candidate for the House of Representatives in the fifth constituency of Tokyo and won the election. In August 1975, three years later, I visited Korea for the second time as a member of the delegation of the Special Committee of the Japan Socialist Party for the Measures for the Korean Question, led by Tadekane Jiro. In May 1985, after a lapse of ten years, I visited Korea for the third time as a deputy leader of the delegation of the Japan Socialist Party led by Secretary-General Tanabe. At the second and the third visit I also met the President. When I met him again in 1985 after a lapse of 15 years since 1970, I found him as young and sturdy as ever, except that his hair had turned grey.

Earlier, the Workers' Party of Korea maintained the development of friendship and interchange with the Japanese people but dealt passively or negatively with the question of establishing diplomatic relations with Japan. This is, I think, because it took into account not only the

established fact that the "Japan-South Korea Treaty" was concluded in 1965, but also that if diplomatic relations between Japan and Korea are normalized, "two Koreas" will come into being.

Today, negotiations between the governments to set up diplomatic relations between Japan and Korea are going on, and I'm convinced that although there will be various twists and turns in the future, diplomatic relations between Japan and Korea will surely be established.

If this is realized and the so young, hale and hearty President visits Japan, how rapidly will the friendly relations between the Japanese and Korean people develop? And how great a pleasure and pride will it give to the Korean residents in Japan? I sincerely hope that the date would come at the earliest possible date.

The Korean People Who Receive the Guidance of Great President Kim Il Sung Is Really Happy

Antaku Tsunehiko, Former Member of the House of Representatives

Reception–August 1970

The feeling of reverence for President Kim Il Sung of hundreds of millions of people in the world grows deeper year by year.

Those who have been received by him, or the people in the world who are studying his glorious revolutionary history and immortal revolutionary thought, admire him as a revolutionary genius and great thinker and look up to him as the father of the people, a person with a lofty virtue.

I preserve an unforgettable memory. When the DPRK was founded 30 years ago, I was then young and served as the chief secretary of a small branch of the former Communication Labour Union in Yamagata Prefecture. Around that time, I had organized a demonstration in celebration of the founding of the DPRK only to be mercilessly suppressed by the US occupation army and detained by the Yamagata Military Government, its organization.

After the suppression I felt the importance of solidarity with the Korean people all the more keenly and began to think seriously what we, the Japanese people, should do. After that, I heard from the Korean citizens in Japan, who lived in my neighbourhood, about General Kim Il Sung and zealously collected documents associated with him, studying the brilliant history of the Korean people who had fought for the independence of their country. That is how I came to form a strong attachment for President Kim Il Sung, the hero of the nation, a peerless patriot and creator of the Juche idea.

I met him for the first time in August 1970 when I visited Korea as a member of the Japan Socialist Party delegation which was led by Chairman Narita.

At that time, I, as the Chairman of the Special Committee of the

Japan Socialist Party for the Measures for the Korean Question was in the midst of a struggle which was aimed mainly at defending the democratic, national rights of the Korean citizens in Japan involving resumption of their repatriation, a register of their Korean nationality, the fight for frustrating the immigration control law, the defence of national education, and so on. Through this struggle I visited Korea frequently, which I saw even in my dreams, and was devoted entirely to the Korean question, that is, to the question of the promotion of friendship between the Japanese and Korean people and the independent peaceful reunification of Korea.

Around this time Korea was building a socialist industrial country according to their Seven-Year National Economic Plan, which had been started in 1961. The grand plan was nearing completion, due to the well-known work methods and work systems such as Chongsan-ri spirit, Chongsan-ri method and the Taean work system.

Braving an extremely strained situation created by the *Pueblo* incident and obstructive manœuvrings of US imperialism, the Republic fulfilled the historical task of socialist industrialization. It entered a period of remarkable progress; it was about to set upon a new epochal Six-Year Plan to further consolidate the material and technical foundations of socialism by pushing forward the three revolutions–ideological, technical and cultural, and to free the working people of arduous labour in all spheres.

At last, the day came when I could meet President Kim Il Sung.

We entered the meeting place, together with the ambassadors of all countries and the many delegations visiting Korea, for the celebration of August 15, the day of liberation.

Musics of many countries were played either quietly or loudly before the opening of the meeting. When the music of an Arab country was being played, the members of its delegation disturbed the solemn atmosphere by shouting "encore" repeatedly, and whistling.

That surprised and quite bewildered us, however, the President turned to the delegation and said something to them with a smile. He very unconventionally gestured to the person concerned as if saying "Do it once again. ..."

I was deeply moved by this, thinking, "He most naturally has to be respected by not only the Korean people but the people of the world, too.

"Can there be any other leader who could do such a thing so smoothly in another country? Only President Kim Il Sung. I'm sure."

As an occasion which was given to the Japan Socialist Party for the first time, on August 22, immediately after the completion of the joint statement between the Japan Socialist Party and the Workers' Party of Korea our party headed by Chairman Narita had an opportunity to have long talks with the President, about the world situation, socialist construction in Korea and various other questions.

When it was time for lunch he led all of us to a banquet hall, saying that he wanted to continue the talk while eating.

During the conversation, the President asked Chairman Narita about the defence of the national rights of Korean citizens in Japan. At this, the Chairman replied, "Mr. Antaku knows it well so I'll ask him to explain it". When I stood up and was about to explain, the President called to me, raising his hand, "It'll be difficult to speak when you're seated at another table, so come here, please." When I was about to say, "My voice is loud so I can do it here," he repeated: "A dialogue easily comes to a mutual understanding when you are facing each other closely. Please come here." When I was at a loss what to do, a man moved everything, the food and dishes for me, to the President's side as he had told the man to do.

Can there be another person who, as the leader of a country, treats people so unconventionally in any other country of the world? He was indeed a kind, ordinary and modest man. At that moment, all what had happened during that day commemorating liberation flashed in my mind, and I could hardly restrain my tears.

I was utterly charmed by him.

I wrote about this in another article, and have told about it on many occasions but no one really believed me, saying, "It's not likely that President Kim Il Sung had treated you so." However, only after hearing my enthusiastic and sincere explanation did they seem to believe me at last and said: "The Korean people have been blessed with real happiness. There will never be a person like President Kim Il Sung any more."

In January 1972, I, as the Secretary-General of the Dietmen's League for the Promotion of Japan-Korea Friendship, which was organized by supra-partisan diet members, visited Korea once again as the

Chief Secretary of its First Korea Visiting Group led by Mr. Kuno Chuji of the Liberal Democratic Party. At that time, besides me, our party included reporters accompanying us who met the President for the first time.

They marvelled at the building of socialism in Korea, praised the personality of the President in particular, saying: "He makes people feel a strong affinity for him and he doesn't impress us as the 'general who forced his way through the flames of the anti-Japanese armed struggle'. I have so far thought that 'he was fastidious and fearful'. Although he spoke for long, his logic was sound and he cracked jokes. ... Really wonderful, and I well knew that he's a prominent great politician in the world". Even after they had returned to Japan, the President continued to be a big topic of their conversation.

Some Diet members wrote booklets in which they described their deep impressions and wonders. Through these one can learn that all who had met the President came to feel a deep respect for him.

With tears in his eyes, the leader Kuno Chuji said to me: "President Kim Il Sung is a great politician. Mr. Antaku is quite right. As a man with a long political career, I have never received such a deep impression anywhere else."

Moreover, seeing the President walking to greet us in front of the lift near the hall and shaking hands with all of us, one by one, we were touched all the more deeply. He clapped me on the shoulder, saying, "I met you before", and I felt great pleasure. The cameramen accompanying us photographed the moment. I teased them into giving me a reproduction of it and preserved it carefully to show to my friends at times through a projector. Thus, I became an object of envy.

In a very kindly tone, the President spoke in detail about the relations between Japan and Korea, the situation in south Korea, the provocative acts of the US army entrenched in south Korea under the cloak of the UN, the importance of enhancing the Juche character and the grand socialist construction in Korea, and the importance of promoting the friendly relations between Japan and Korea for the peace of Asia and the future of the two countries. He interlarded his talk with interesting episodes so that other members of the delegation, too, who had been so tense till then were taken unawares at times and roared with laughter. Thus, a harmonious and friendly atmosphere prevailed.

Forgetful of the elapse of the scheduled time, the leader Kuno asked one member from each party to offer words of thanks and to express his determination to the President so I stealthily gesticulated to him that the time was up, indicating my wristwatch. However, the President noticed and said: "Time doesn't matter. Go ahead, please, and don't worry." Giving a slight nod, he listened to each one respectively and said, "I express my gratitude for your remarks. Thank you." The image of the so familiar, great President is still vivid in my mind.

About 10 years before, in the rural area where I was born I obtained many pamphlets on the speech the President had delivered at the general meeting of the Party of Chongsan-ri in 1960 under the title *For the Correct Management of Socialist Agriculture,* and distributed copies among the young men to study. At that time, it evoked a great response. They said: "It's easy to understand, but how does the leader of a country know the actual circumstances of the rural areas so well? Really wonderful. I want to see the actual conditions of the countryside of Korea myself. Aren't there any other materials?" They asked questions like this in succession so after that, round-table talks were held under the title "The Agriculture of Korea and Japan" In particular, in the last few years I did lecturing and projection tours of various districts with the Korean documentary film *A Bumper Crop,* which was produced in 1974. The young men I had taught became so enlightened that I was able to enlist their help and seek their counsel.

This is how the greatness of President Kim Il Sung is so well known even in a small farm village of Japan.

In the course of the contacts I had had with many people of Korea in over the last 10 years and through my meetings with beloved President Kim Il Sung, I felt all the more deeply that the Korean people who live, receiving the wise guidance of the great President in their socialist fatherland, are really happy. Indeed, I feel envious of them.

I am convinced of the new development of Korea and the realization of its independent peaceful reunification. I regard the movement for the establishment of genuine solidarity between Japan and Korea as my lifework and strive towards that aim.

I sincerely wish President Kim Il Sung a long life.

The Man Who Moves Asia and the World

Takagi Takeo, Ex-Director of the
Society for Japan-Korea Cultural
Exchange and Editorial Writer
of *Yomiuri Shimbun*

Reception Day–December 31, 1971

"This is a gift our respected President Kim Il Sung has sent to you," said a person from the Korean Journalists Union staying in Japan, when he visited my home one evening in May despite his busy schedule. "He asked me to call on you without fail during my visit to Japan and to condole with you on the demise of your wife."

The President, so deeply concerned about me, a mere journalist of Japan, had sent me an invaluable gift. My heart overflowed with his kindness.

An ordinary journalist, I had now been favoured with his concern back in Japan, too, just as in Korea.

Such warm favour is not restricted to me alone; this is a manifestation of solidarity with the Japanese people, I think.

His gifts of some fancywork and Korean insam (ginseng) brought back the happy two months I had spent with the President.

An Unforgettable Scene

What I had seen on December 31, 1971 is still fresh in my memory.

Since I had heard that President Kim Il Sung used to spend every New Year's Eve together with children at the Pyongyang Students and Children's Palace I went there to meet him. At half past seven in the evening, the political leader who moves the world appeared. Instantaneously loud cheers broke out, literally shaking the palace. Dozens of children in the front row rushed to him and clung to his sleeves endearingly, chattering "Father, Father. ..." The children in the back rows tried to approach him, waving their hands and cheering, their eyes glistening

with tears. The bulky physique of the President was jostled from side to side amidst the swaying surge of children. Smiling broadly, he was now passing his hand over the children's heads, now listening to what they were saying, bending down to hear them. At the sight of the President's heartwarming affection I felt something warm rise up in my throat. My first impression of President Kim Il Sung was very thrilling. General Kim Il Sung who had braved the sacred war against Japan, hugging an orphan in his arms! The General who gave up precious money laden with his mother's warm love to clothe ragged children!

Stories of the President in his guerrilla struggle days flashed across my mind. I wonder has there ever been such a head of state as he in the world, who greets New Year's Day with the children every year! I wonder if there has ever been such a head of state as he in other countries whom the children call "Father!" clinging to his sleeves and shoulders.

Although I had been to many countries I had never as yet seen or heard of such a leader. Looking at the children of this country, who are so immensely delighted to meet their "Father", I had now discovered the "new strength of Asia" that moves the world after my life-long quest of it.

I had met many statesmen during my tour of southeast Asian countries. However, that would not suffice for me yet to talk of Asia or to tell which way the current of the world was to flow in the future. At such a moment I had heard of Korea, particularly the Juche idea authored by President Kim Il Sung. The thought that hit me was: It is Korea. Unless I get to know Korea I cannot speak of Asia. I wonder whether the man who moves the world is in Korea? And a strong desire gripped me to make sure of this myself. It can be said, therefore, that my visit to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea marked a decisive juncture in my journalistic life. This was why the impression of President Kim Il Sung among the children was engraved so indelibly in my mind.

I met the President for the first time in the lounge of the palace where he welcomed me with the words, "Have you recovered from the cold?" When he kindly asked about my health, holding my hand in his, I felt a lump rise up in my throat. From the moment I had set foot in Pyongyang he had been deeply concerned about my poor health. I don't know how he had learned that I had caught cold, but he had told a

cadre to move me from my hotel to a guest house for foreign state leaders and have me undergo close examination. At the President's request, the physicians of Pyongyang made a thorough examination and concluded that my intestinal trouble was a result of bad chewing of my food. So I had new dentures put in. I had my tooth pulled out in the evening of December 25 and ate an apple he sent me on the 29th. It was surprising speed. I had not eaten an apple before, so the delicious and sour juice was fragrant in my mouth. I did not know how to express my gratitude to him. He was delighted to hear that I had had new denture and had gotten over my cold. He invited me to the children's art performance to be given at the theater of the palace, conducting me there himself. The curtain rose with a bell ringing in the hopeful New Year. Every time the number of the performance changed, he asked if I had liked it and, smiling, he said that this was the first time he had greeted New Year's Day together with a foreign journalist.

After the performance was over, the President sent for me. When I was there, the teachers who had guided the performance were also present. The President introduced me as his friend to them and clinked glasses with us, greeting the New Year's Day.

Our conversation was resumed. "When I visit the Republic the next time I'd like to write your biography touring the revolutionary battle-sites where you, President, fought in the 1930s," I said. Surprised, declining with a wave of both hands, he said that I don't need to do so and, if I do intend to, he would like me to write about the people. He looked embarrassed and blushed. Gazing at him, I thought, "He's a genuine people's leader." Standing beside the President, you feel as if you were at the side of your parents. Everybody says this. This remark is full of warm feelings that endear him to us like an old friend.

This must be what they call the quality of the great man, I presume.

When he treated me, a mere journalist, as his friend and cared for every detail, starting with my health to the news coverage, all I was able to do was to be deeply grateful for his kind favour.

Such intense emotions overwhelmed me on that New Year's Day of 1972.

Juche–the World Current

"You have spoken a great deal about our on-the-spot guidance. We go to the masses to learn from them rather than to try to guide them.

"...Especially when we are in a difficult situation, we should go deep among the masses and discuss all matters with them and take their advice.

"The popular masses are our teachers. We always learn from them".

That was how the President began to receive me on January 10, 1972.

Although I knew a little about his field guidance, listening to him, I came to realize that what was more essential there was the unbreakable kinship between the leader and the people than the politics itself.

I was able to go everywhere freely for news coverage thanks to his kind concern. I visited the family of orphaned sisters, not to mention the workers of Kangson. During my coverage I could feel his warm love for the people.

We toured the eastern coasts.

In Soho I saw six-storey buildings lined up in a sunny place, looking like a picture.

"Is that a hotel?"

The Korean reporter who accompanied us said: "Those are the apartment houses of pelagic fishermen. Soho is a fishermen's city." I couldn't believe him at first, because fishermen's dwellings were usually miserable ones, both in Japan and south Korea.

The President had fine apartment houses built in scenic spot near the sea for the families of fishermen working far out on the oceans. Such stories are as plentiful as blackberries. I met innumerable workers, peasants and fishermen and children as well–who, showing their oil-stained hands, said that the President had grasped their hands whenever he visited them.

The President has been to every place, and I saw people everywhere cherishing warm feelings of trust, reverence and attachment towards him. The people said that it was thanks to President Kim Il Sung that Korea existed and that their lives flourished. The

President, on his part, said that the countless heroes in factories and the countryside were pushing ahead with revolution and construction and they were giving him courage and strength.

Herein lies one of the reasons why I had acclaimed him the "master of leadership".

The art of the President's leadership, who regards the people as most precious of all and inspires them to display their strength boundlessly in the revolution and construction, is a new type of leadership based on the mental activity of the human being.

The President said:

"Establishing Juche means that the people approach the revolution and construction in their own country as masters. In other words, it means the embodiment of independent and creative spirits; the people must adopt an independent and creative stand to solve mainly by themselves all the problems arising from the revolutionary struggle and constructive work, in the context of their own country's actual conditions."

This statement of the President helped me to see things clearly in a new light when I tried to grasp what the current of Asia and the world was.

Giving an analysis of the American imperialists' Asian strategy, he declared distinctly, "...Asia today is unlike the Asia of yesterday, and its outlook has radically changed."

Most certainly. Today new waves are sweeping over Asia. The main current of the times is Juche and the modern time proceeds along the path of Juche.

Here is the light of Asia. The President looked optimistic and his eyes shone brightly when he referred to the Juche idea in his sonorous voice; his Juche-orientated overtures of peace agreements were apparently imbued with warm love of a great man for the country and the people.

The issue of *Yomiuri Shimbun,* carrying his statement, was barred from circulation in south Korea.

Nevertheless, the overtures of the President proposing to have heart-to-heart talks, passing one's former life into oblivion and disregarding political and ideological differences, had given birth to the historic July 4 Joint Statement against the machinations of the obstructionist forces and opened a new way to the reunification of the country.

The Juche idea is alive in the hearts of the Korean people who had restored the country after crushing the material superiority of the devil-

ish Japanese aggressors, the people who had defeated the US aggressors and built Korea magnificently, rising from the ruins like a phoenix. This new, promising idea has become the motive force that moves the wheels of national reunification and the driving force that thrusts Asia and the world ahead.

Originally, as a man who knows little besides journalism, I had positively declined from entering government service. Then why have I now become the Director of the Society for Japan-Korea Cultural Exchange? It is because I hoped to dedicate the remainder of my life to the study of the Juche idea and deemed it most important to make the states with differing systems coexist in a friendly way and to strive for peace.

They say Japan and Korea are "near yet distant neighbours" This expression should be considered a thing of the past now. At present the movements of the Japanese people to improve and normalize Japan-Korea relations are growing stronger.

We had organized the performance tour of the Pyongyang Mansudae Art Troupe in Japan.

After my return from Korea I had reviewed all matters in the light of the Juche idea, when new ways had appeared to resolve the problems.

A handful of people, going against the trend of the times, are scheming to enact the "Immigration Control Law", Japan's infamy, and some bad Japanese students are committing such unpardonable outrages as attacking Korean high-school boys and girls. By this, however, they are digging their own graves.

President Kim Il Sung has elucidated the historic five-point programme for the independent peaceful reunification of Korea.

The President makes a statement, and the whole world reacts to it. Today his appeal, his great idea, causes repercussions across the world. I have thus become assured once more that President Kim Il Sung, the initiator of the Juche idea, is a leader who can move the world. Although I had written this article while I was following the recent process of the publication of my book, *Kim Il Sung, Master of Leadership* by the Pancho Bookstore, the thought keeps me in suspense that perhaps I had missed something, that I could have written more.

It seems to me that there is no end to the description of President Kim Il Sung.

My Interview with President Kim Il Sung

Kawasaki Kanji, Member of the House of Representatives and Director of the Theoretical Centre under the Japan Socialist Party

Reception Day–January 10, 1972

The world situation had altered radically with the admission of China into the UNO in the autumn of 1971. Diet toward the close of the year had become excited about the conclusion of the agreement on the return of Okinawa.

I was elected the Director of the International Affairs Bureau at the year-end party convention. Prior to my visit to China and Korea, I met Tanaka Kakuei, Minister of International Trade and Industry, and proposed that for the promotion of trade between Japan and Korea a mutual interchange should be realized between the leading officials in this field. What I had in mind then was the experience of the LT (locumtenency) trade of the Liao-Takasaki agency between Japan and China. Tanaka agreed with me, yet the Ministry of Justice was opposed to it so that nothing came of it. After spending New Year's Day in Beijing, I visited Pyongyang in January. Tatebayashi Senri, then Director of the International Department of the Socialist Party and the special correspondent of *Shakai Shinpo* in Beijing (afterwards he became Director of the International Affairs Bureau and then Director of the General Affairs Bureau and died in October 1989) accompanied me from Beijing.

On January 10, 1972 I met Premier Kim Il Sung for the first time. The moment I saw him standing in front of the door of the lift in the government building, I felt very embarrassed. It occurred to me that he is a man who captivates people. His tanned face, his healthy-looking and bulky physique, his round spectacles looked very endearing to me. To my question, "What is your policy toward the UN?", he answered, "China's entry will effect a turn in the UNO which had been under the American baton. It is all right to become a member nation but we do not mind if we don't; this is the stand of our country." In answer to my proposed "conclusion of a nonaggression treaty between Japan and Korea

for the sake of Asian peace", he said, "While concluding a military alliance with the south, Japan concludes a nonaggression treaty with the north? That's no good. Let us think about a nonaggression treaty with a unified Korea."

Tatebayashi published the interview in *Shakai Shinpo.* I remember that when I returned home, the political secretary of the American embassy called on me and, with a preliminary remark that he had gotten a hint of some changes in Korea, said he would like to hear my explanations, and bothered me, prying me with questions. However, the Japanese Foreign Ministry showed no sign of any reaction.

Six months later, a joint statement on peaceful reunification was published by the governments of north and south Korea. Probably the President had had this in mind when he spoke of a nonaggression treaty with a unified Korea, and I now realized their burning aspiration for reunification, to the full.

In 1973 the United States had to back out and the Viet Nam Peace Treaty was signed in Paris. At the time the popular campaigns in Japan were focussed on the return of Okinawa, the normalization of Japan's diplomatic relations with China, and the end of the Viet Nam war. All of them had come to a successful solution. The next on the list was the Korean issue. On April 10 Sugiyama, Deputy Director of the International Department, and I paid a visit to Pyongyang via Beijing. Although we had arrived in Pyongyang it was not easy to attain an interview with President Kim Il Sung, so we spent nervous days because of the airliner bound to Beijing. On April 18, we were received. "I'm sorry I have kept you waiting. It was difficult for me to find the time because of Sihanouk's visit. I will devote the whole of this day to you, instead. Let us exchange our views thoroughly." This was what he said right at the beginning, welcoming us with open arms.

Before leaving Tokyo, I had met Nakasone, Minister of International Trade and Industry, as I had with Mr. Tanaka, to sound him out on my proposed mutual interchange of Japanese and Korean government officials in the field of international trade and industry. Nakasone promised he would "send Japanese officials if the Korean side would receive them". After having listened to my explanations, the President said, "Many people can read Japanese documents in our country. And physically the Koreans are similar to the Japanese, so it's better for us to

import from Japan than from European countries. And we're now fulfilling our long-range plan. We will receive them if the Japanese government would do so." Back home, I conveyed his message to Nakasone, who said, "I'll investigate the possibility of dispatching the people concerned of the Ministry of International Trade and Industry."

However, on August 8 that year Kim Tae Jung was shanghaied while staying in Japan and this incident made the north-south relations tense and changed the situation entirely. Normalization of Japan-China diplomatic relations was followed by the detente in Asia and the issuing of the north-south joint statement, and 24 million *yen* was earmarked out of the budget for the opening of the Japan-Korea trade fair, but this remains unrealized to this day.

Our morning talk over, the President said, "Today is your birthday. Let's celebrate your birthday." With congratulations, he served me with rice cakes plastered over with fish and the like. Kim Yong Nam was also present.

As I had frequently noticed places bearing the sign of "on-the-spot guidance" during my visit to many of them, such as a school, factory and nursery school, I asked him, "Being occupied with state affairs, you still find the time to tour local areas." "I spend more than half a month on local inspection tours. When I see the local scenes for myself and chat with people on the spot, I'm able to find out what questions they have and what they demand and dislike. This is probably why we haven't failed in our internal policies until now, I think," smiled the President. When I met Nakasone, I told him about this. "On-the-spot guidance, that sounds good," Nakasone responded and wrote it down on his pad.

After the talks, we flew to Beijing by a special plane. Foreign Minister Kim Yong Nam, who came to see us off at the airport, spoke to us, "More than 80 countries have diplomatic relations both with north and south Korea; for instance, the embassy in the north and the information centre in the south, or the embassy in the south and the trade representation in the north. Perhaps you'll try to bring the Japanese government to look into this matter." I told Foreign Minister Ohira Masayoshi about it and this problem was also taken up by the Standing Committees on the Budget and Foreign Affairs.

The fourth group of delegates to Korea, led by Chairman Narita, left Niigata on September 5, 1974 and changed to special plane for Pyong-

yang at Khabarovsk and stayed there up to the 13th. Some 2,000 people welcomed us at the Pyongyang Airport. We were very touched. That evening an august banquet was arranged in honor of our arrival. The President said to me as I sat beside him, "Today Foreign Minister Kimura Toshio declared at the Japanese Diet that the government of the Republic exists in the northern half of Korea." This was an official statement made at the Diet for the first time.

In the conversation between Chairman Narita and the President, the question of smoking was also raised. Chairman Narita was a heavy smoker, but the President only kept puffing. Jokingly, he remarked, "I smoke when I'm out of the house because my wife is severe about it at home". He said his favourite dish was pine-nut porridge. From that time on I usually eat pine-nut porridge as a dessert to Korean broils. Chairman Narita and the President conversed unreservedly, probably because they were of the same age.

In connection with September 9, the 26th anniversary of the foundation of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, many delegates from the third-world states of Asia and Africa visited so that he was busy with them, talking and receiving them on courtesy calls. Notwithstanding, political negotiations that lasted over 15 hours were held three times during our one-week stay. Narita had tete-a-tete talks with the President in the car on the way to a spa.

To summarize the range of that day's topics, they were question concerning the reunification of north and south Korea, ways for normalization of diplomatic relations between Japan and Korea, the tie-up between "President" Pak and the Tanaka Cabinet, the UN General Assembly due to meet in the autumn and the question concerning the entry into it, etc. Chairman Narita told me later, "The President is very well informed of the international situation. It seems a system exists which sends information to him." Under the shade of a tree at the spa, the President touched on support to the independence movement in Algeria and Samdech Sihanouk of Cambodia.

I had made all arrangements through contacts with Kim Yong Nam. Before our departure from Pyongyang, Narita said to me that he was sincerely grateful to me for the successful visit of the fourth group of delegations to Korea. He has now passed away.

One month after our return home, the 61st Tokyo Conference of the

Interparliamentary Union was held and I played host to the DPRK delegation led by Kim Yong Nam. Many years had elapsed since then and in the autumn of 1990 negotiations for the normalization of diplomatic relations between Japan and Korea started, based on the joint statement of the Socialist Party and the Liberal Democratic Party of Japan and the Workers' Party of Korea. And the simultaneous admission of the two Koreas into the UN is to be discussed at the General Assembly due to meet in September this year. Vice-Premier Kim Yong Nam is reported to be present at the UN General Assembly.

At present a great change is taking place in the Asian situation surrounding the Korean peninsula. The Special Committee for Measures for the Promotion of International Economy under the Socialist Party which I head proposed disarmament in northeast Asia which was in slow progress and the promotion of economic cooperation among Japan, north and south Korea, China, the Soviet Union and the United States. Once realized, they will no doubt prove their worth in the 21st century. For this sake, too, I sincerely hope that President Kim Il Sung may enjoy good health.

The Wise Leader of the Present Age

Kuno Chuji, Former Member of the House of Representatives and Ex-Chairman of the Dietmen's League for Promotion of Japan-Korea Friendship

Reception–January 1972

I met President Kim Il Sung during my visit to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea in January 1972 as the head of the delegation of the Dietmen's League for Promotion of Japan-Korea Friendship.

President Kim Il Sung was full of youthful vigour and guiding state affairs in the best of health.

As he grasped our hands warmly with his big hands, his face beaming brightly, we could feel that he was in splendid good health.

His strong grasp gave me the impression that he was a great leader, full of confidence, who has always led the people to victory through the difficult course of revolution and construction.

He was so sympathetic to us from the very first moment that we felt as if we were old acquaintances. His magnanimous behaviour which makes us feel as if he had met an old friend, his convincing accuracy when he refers with assurance to internal issues and external developments, especially questions concerning relations with Japan, are intermingled with humour! It struck me deeply that the President, who attracted us so powerfully, was a leader among leaders in the present age.

Visiting the Republic I sensed intuitively how fervently the Korean people revere their President. This was a natural feeling of respect for him.

Under President Kim Il Sung's leadership the Korean people have developed the country into a socialist industrial state at an unprecedentedly rapid rate, rising up from the ashes of the Korean war. Looking at such a remarkable change, I once again marvelled at the great leadership of President Kim Il Sung.

He had entered the difficult path of revolutionary activity for national

liberation when young and, leading these struggles to victory, had created the wondrous Juche idea.

This idea has it that the popular masses are the masters and the motive force of revolution and construction. In other words, that one is responsible for one's own destiny and has the capacity for shaping one's own destiny.

The Juche idea represents the wisdom and intelligence of the Korean people who had experienced the ordeals of history; this is a very precious deep-going idea not only to the Korean people but also to us, the Japanese people.

I am sure that today's progress in Korea has been possible due to the wise leadership of President Kim Il Sung based on the Juche idea.

However, the idea has not only led the revolution and construction to victory in the Republic. It is of great importance, too, in the solution of complex problems in the present world.

President Kim Il Sung, adhering to the principle based on the Juche idea, advances a very flexible and comprehensive policy that is suitable to reality.

That he advances very realistic proposals acceptable to those who desire the country's reunification, the independent peaceful reunification of Korea, is undeniable proof.

Regarding the present poor relations between Japan and Korea, he suggested very reasonable proposals for setting up good neighbourly relations.

At present the voices calling for friendship between Japan and Korea are rising ever higher among the Japanese people. There are strong indications that the spring which will thaw the ice-bound Japan-Korea relations is drawing near.

May President Kim Il Sung enjoy a long life in good health.

Meeting the Respected President

Hirose Hideyoshi, Director of
the Secretariate of the Dietmen's
League for Promotion of Japan-Korea
Friendship and Member of the
House of Representatives

Reception–January 1972

1) Foreword

Nearly half a century has passed since the end of World War II. Nevertheless, the postwar matter between Japan and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea remains unsettled up till now and the matter of normalizing diplomatic relations between the two countries is still up on that shelf. The official contacts between the two governments finally began in September 1990 owing to the issue of the joint statement of the delegations of the Liberal Democratic Party and the Japan Socialist Party and the Workers' Party of Korea.

In the past Japan had held the Korean people under her colonial domination from 1905 and had perpetrated all kinds of bestial outrages against them: they mercilessly suppressed their means of livelihood and human rights, trampled upon their national dignity by forcing them to change their Korean names into the Japanese style, enforced a conscription system to enslave them to Japanese militarism and forcibly took them away from Korea, putting them to backbreaking labour in coal and ore mines in different parts of Japan. Japan must never forget this stark historical fact that it had inflicted indescribable misfortune and disaster upon the Korean people.

Although Japan and Korea are geographically the nearest neighbours with only a small sea between them, they are distant countries at present. Korea has added much throughout history towards developing Japan's culture and enlightenment. Korean culture has exerted an immeasurably great influence on her from ancient times to the Middle Ages. Unfortunately, the Korean peninsula has been divided by the 38th

parallel into the ROK in the south and the DPRK in the north, and the tragedy still drags on today when they are unable to return to the former "one Korea" of a homogeneous nation, speaking one mother tongue. This is miserable reality borne by the cold war system, an outcome of the US-USSR confrontation, the confrontation between the Eastern and Western camps which began immediately after the Second World War and lasted to the end of 1989.

Today when the American-Russian rapprochement and the changeover from confrontation to dialogue and cooperation have set in, I think this is a golden opportunity to realize "one Korea" after ending the north-south division which is the common aspiration of the Korean people, on the principles of independence, peace and national unity.

Now is the time for Japan, which has been goading the tragic split of north and south Korea toeing the US line, to restore independence and to seriously reflect on and apologize, and to indemnify against its 41-year-long colonial rule; to apologize and compensate for its hostile attitude towards north Korea for nearly half a century following the war; to establish diplomatic relations as early as possible, and develop political, economic and cultural interchange, demand the withdrawal of the US nukes and troops from south Korea, abolish all discrimination against the Koreans in Japan and demand that north and south Korea be reunified on the principle of independence, peace and great national unity.

Only when friendship between Japan and Korea is realized based on the establishment of the unified Korea (the Democratic Confederal Republic of Koryo advocated by President Kim Il Sung) will peace become durable in Asia.

It is said that the expression "1995 will be the first year of national reunification" is widespread both in north and south Korea. I sincerely hope that the notable, respected President Kim Il Sung may enjoy good health and accomplish the great cause to "reunify Korea into one country".

2) Recollections of My Interview with President Kim Il Sung

After the war I had contacts with Korean residents in Japan as I had supported their spontaneous struggles for human rights against racial

discrimination, and also as the secretary of the prefectural headquarters of the Socialist Party I had fought side by side with the officials of the prefectural headquarters of Chongryon (the General Association of Korean Residents in Japan) for the realization of national education as well for repatriation and the free travel to their homeland. Through these struggles I had become friendly with many people. Even after I was elected to the House of Representatives in 1960 I demanded the government to guarantee the Koreans in Japan a legal status and human rights, and particularly protested against their discriminating oppression in business activities. Like this, I pressed on the government to recognize the special status of the Koreans in Japan, and also took part in investigating the Immigration Control Law. I took part in these movements in the capacity of a member or one of three key officials of the Special Committee of the Japan Socialist Party for the Measures for the Korean Question. I was willing to take the side of Chongryon or the Association of Korean Traders and Industrialists when they lodged demands to the Japanese government or when they met government officials, and have done everything I can in their support. While engaging in these movements, I was upset at the attitude of the government of the Liberal Democratic Party pursuing a hostile policy toward the DPRK, toeing the US line, and organized the Dietmen's League for Promotion of Japan-Korea Friendship in November 1971 as a supra-party organization. In January 1972 I visited the Republic as a member of the delegation of the Dietmen's League for Promotion of Japan-Korea Friendship and had several talks with Pak Song Chol and other leading officials and succeeded in the conclusion of the historic "Tentative Agreement on Japan-Korea Trade" which opened the way to economic interchange between the two countries. Consequently, the sum total of transactions between the two countries in 1973 jumped up by a wide margin.

Afterwards, I usually took part in negotiations between the two countries held in connection with the signing, discontinuity or extension of the "Tentative Agreement on Japan-Korea Fishery" Regarding the "Tentative Agreement on Japan-Korea Fishery", which saw light due to the kind favour of respected President Kim Il Sung toward the Japanese small fishermen and the warm friendship between the Japan Socialist Party and the Workers' Party of Korea as a unique guideline for the

friendship between the two countries, I have been grateful to the President and have adhered to the stand of protecting the livelihood of the fishermen concerned.

Through my eight visits to Korea–three times as a delegate of the Dietmen's League for Promotion of Japan-Korea Friendship, three times as a member of the delegation of the Japan Socialist Party to Korea and two times at a special invitation of the government of the Republic–I have exerted all my efforts to promote friendly relations and economic interchange between our two countries, though diplomatic relations did not as yet exist.

On these visits, if my memory serves me right, I had the honour to talk with the President four times and dined with him in an amicable atmosphere two or three times.

I should like to give the impressions I received about the President on those occasions and my vivid recollections about him, as my contribution to the editors.

(1) What impressed me first was that President Kim Il Sung was a man of noble personality who meets a person with a warm heart and a loving embrace. Although he is the standard-bearer of the anti-imperialist, anti-Japanese revolution, a man who fought dauntlessly in defiance of suppression and liberated the country, founded and developed the Republic, there is no sign of this in his behaviour. Indeed, he has the qualities and noble character worthy of the supreme leader of the Republic.

(2) When I visited Korea with Kuno Chuji, Chairman of the Dietmen's League, at the invitation of the President, we called at the villa residence in Mt. Myohyang. The President came as far as the entrance to meet us and hugged me and pressed his cheek to mine and then spoke highly of my contribution to the promotion of friendship between Japan and Korea. I blush to remember that I was so excited that I failed to return the compliments properly.

(3) This was immediately after rapprochement had set in between Russia and the USA and the socialist system was collapsing in many East-European countries, particularly in Czechoslovakia, Romania and Hungary. However, not the slightest upset had taken place in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. What was it that kept it so tranquil?

At the luncheon, the President began with the words, "Let's talk and not mention any delicate topics". Amidst the amicable atmosphere of the luncheon we conversed, but that issue would crop up time and again, and he would say confidently, "Such a thing will never occur in our country. There are no corrupt officials at all in Korea. We go among the people and serve them in the spirit of independence. You need not worry about it." His statement lodged firmly in my mind.

(4) I took a hand in the conclusion of the "Tentative Agreement on Japan-Korea Trade". At the time he said, "If Japan, with the signing of this agreement, will import more of our good anthracite to use for smelting we won't mind if you have to revise the Seventh Economic Plan right now." The conclusion of the "Tentative Agreement on Japan-Korea Fishery" was also his kind favour towards the lives of the small squid fishermen of Japan. It was due to his decisive magnanimous measures, too, that enabled the Japanese fishermen to gain a huge profit by letting them fish in the north Korean economic waters without paying the fishery taxation during the period from September 1977 to December 1987. There was also the sad suspension of this agreement as it became impossible to renew it owing to the Korean side's repulsion for the hostile steps taken by the Japanese government. Even when things had come to such a pass, Japan's requests were gratified many a time by the bold decisions taken by the President in view of the friendship with the Japan Socialist Party through talks between the Socialist Party delegation headed by Ishibashi and the President. "If the Japanese authorities are unwilling to admit our delegates, you had better come to confer in our country." When he declared this so broad-mindedly I received a very solemn impression, one typical for a leader.

(5) In December 1989 esteemed President Kim Il Sung learned that Kuno Chuji, Chairman, and Hirose, General Secretary, of the Dietmen's League for Promotion of Japan-Korea Friendship, had retired from politics. Appreciating their years-long contribution to the promotion of Japan-Korea friendship he dined with them at his villa residence and showed benevolent favours on them. And he saw to it that Kuno and Hirose were awarded the Order of Friendship First Class by decree. This is yet another unforgettable story.

(6) President Kim Il Sung was a heavy smoker.

I'm also a heavy smoker and despite my wife's irksome scolding, I

haven't quit smoking yet. At the above-mentioned luncheon I found that he did not smoke, so I asked, "You've quit smoking?" Open-heartedly, he said, "My wife took my cigarettes away after a serious lecture. And even my grandchildren hid them, saying that it was harmful to my health. No help from them." Listening to his hearty laughter, I pictured a good-natured grandfather who loved his grandchildren.

(7) Highly esteemed President Kim Il Sung devoted all his youth to the anti-imperialist, anti-Japanese struggle and victoriously liberated the country to end the 41-year-long Japanese imperialists' colonial rule, and founded the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. Based on his Juche idea, he established the three principles–independence in politics, self-sufficiency in the economy and self-reliance in defence–and as the supreme leader has invariably endeavoured for the growth of the national economy and the progress of the Republic. It will really be a wonderful event when he will be celebrating his 80th birthday in good health on April 15, 1992. The history of the world knows no instance of a leader who remains at the summit of politics of a country for such a long period–a period lasting half a century.

Moreover, he is not a dictator but a leader, who is revered and infinitely loved by the entire people as their father. Wherein lies the secret? Surely it is because the President, translating the Juche idea into reality, called at factories, enterprises, at farms and fishermen's villages in every nook and corner of the country and went among the people and gave political guidance to them, infusing them with the spirit of independence.No one will object if I call him the greatest leader of the 20th century.

Today Secretary Kim Jong Il, the faithful successor to President Kim Il Sung, is promoting the President's Juche idea and putting it into practice. I applaud this from the bottom of my heart. In conclusion, I wish them a long life and good health and the Republic ever-lasting prosperity.

My Meeting with President Kim Il Sung

Asukata Ichio, Former Mayor of
Yokohama and Chairman of
the Japan Socialist Party

Reception Day–May 14, 1972

Our delegation of the Japan National Association of Socialist Mayors, inclusive of the suite and the press corps, visited the DPRK, a neighbouring country, in May 1972, an important year which marked the 60th birthday of President Kim Il Sung. (Then Asukata Ichio led the visiting delegation of the Japan National Association of Socialist Mayors–*Editor.*)

Although it was a very short time that we stayed in Pyongyang, we were extremely pleased to meet President Kim Il Sung, the respected leader of the Korean people, and to have a cordial talk with him that lasted some five hours. I can never forget the impression I received at the time as long as I live.

During our stay we learned about the great Juche idea of President Kim Il Sung and the grandeur of socialist construction based on the idea, and heard a great deal about the experiences of the Korean revolution.

Great Magnanimity and Warm Atmosphere

On May 14, 1972 our delegation were waiting for the President at the guest house by a lake in the suburbs of Pyongyang.

It was a really picturesque scenery of fresh verdure under a bright clear azure sky so typical of Korea.

To my surprise, the man-made reservoir, which was as large as the Chujenji Lake of Nikko, Japan, was built in a place that was over 500 metres above sea level.

I was feasting my eyes on the beautiful scenery, under the illusion that I was catching a glimpse of the Korean people's sagacity and the

building of socialism in Korea, when the people around me suddenly stirred.

A car was approaching from the other side of the reservoir. Soon it stopped right in front of us.

It was the first time I was to meet President Kim Il Sung. What is he like... With such thoughts in mind, I rushed to the car to find nobody in the rear seat. That's strange, I thought, and the next moment I saw the President–who was familiar to me through photographs–sitting beside the chauffeur.

Frankly speaking, this surprised me. In Japan, as a general rule, a functionary occupies the rear seat imposingly and gets out of the car after his secretary opens the door.

But President Kim Il Sung alighted from the front seat, opening the door himself. Then he strode straight to us. "Mr. Asukata, welcome! I'm sorry for having kept you waiting." So saying, he grasped our hands warmly with his big hands. It struck me at the moment that this was the hand that drew people.

"Well, let's have our talk over a cup of tea..." His hand around my shoulder, he conducted me up along the staircase to the central hall.

It was really an affectionate, heartwarming hospitality. This was a surprise to us, little of what we had imagined, who had expected that the leader of the country would behave solemnly and ceremoniously. All of us were completely enthralled by his jovial manner.

Walking up the stairs, he said, "I'm so happy to meet you. Do You feel any inconvenience in Pyongyang?" And other words such as this. His concern was so solicitous and warm.

I felt at the moment that his speech and behaviour were very energetic and had the power of attracting the people he met, of great magnanimity and cordiality.

He has a bass voice, resounding and pleasing to the ear, and his logic was persuasive and buoyant. It seemed to me that his conversational art was one of the world's rarest.

And further, how easy it is to make friend with him! From the first meeting you begin to talk, and even crack a joke, informally and without restraint as if he had been an acquaintance of a hundred years. This earned him the admiration of our entire delegation and the accompanying press corps.

The great personality of the President, his charm of attraction and his power of persuasion, the familiarity which makes you want to throw yourself into his arms the moment you meet him.... I pondered a lot over these qualities and characteristics in my own way. However, thinking that they were impressions I had received in a limited space of time, I prefer to refrain from making any further comments.

In Korea a man's varied personal characteristics and qualities bear a greater importance when working on strategy and tactics as well as in organized efforts for the building of socialism, the country's reunification and international affairs.

In this sense, I thought, the Korean people, who are guided by such a rarely great leader as President Kim Il Sung, are really happy.

Through my visit to Pyongyang I came to realize for the first time what made the Korean citizens and the Chongryon officials in Japan cherish such a great respect for and faith in President Kim Il Sung.

When I returned home my wife told me, "You've fallen for President Kim Il Sung." She told the truth, I think. Even now I feel drawn to President Kim Il Sung, who is not only the great leader of the Korean people but also one of the outstanding leaders of Asia and the world.

The Juche Idea Is the Compass for Revolution and Construction

At the interview President Kim Il Sung replied kindly and heartily to the few questions we raised for nearly five long hours.

Beginning with the international situation, these were problems concerning the organization of the administrative units and the functions and role of local government organs and the system and contents of education in the DPRK, the Korean citizens in Japan, the friendship and solidarity between the Korean and Japanese peoples, Okinawa, etc.

What he said at the time was published in Pyongyang under the heading *A Talk to the Delegation of the Japan National Association of Socialist Mayors*, which is widely read in Japan.

The keynote of his speech was the great Juche idea he had initiated and evolved.

I am not a scholar in that line so I can say little about the Juche idea.

But there is something that made a sound impression on me.

I know that the Juche idea had originated during the arduous yet glorious, brilliant anti-Japanese revolutionary struggle, organized and led by President Kim Il Sung, and developed through the struggle for socialist revolution and construction and for national reunification and the international communist movement.

Referring to the Juche idea, the President said:

"In a nutshell, the idea of Juche means that the masters of the revolution and the work of construction are the popular masses and that they are also the motive force of the revolution and construction. In other words, one is responsible for one's own destiny and one has also the capacity for hewing out one's own destiny."

He also stated:

"To establish Juche means holding fast to the principle of solving for oneself all problems of the revolution and construction in conformity with the actual conditions of one's country, and mainly by one's own efforts."

Proceeding from the Juche idea he has formulated the guiding theories of the Workers' Party of Korea and the Government of the Republic on the revolution and construction.

In this way the Juche idea is brilliantly embodied in the steady independence and the boundless creativity in the Korean revolution and construction on the principle of political independence, economic self-sufficiency and national self-defence.

Moreover, starting from the viewpoint that man is the most precious and powerful being in the world, the Juche idea regards man as the dearest of all and gives him priority in the consideration and solution of all questions. Accordingly, the voluntary advance movement of the entire people manifests itself in the shining achievements of socialist construction.

Thus, the Juche idea has become not only the guideline for revolution and construction to the Korean people but also fully accords with proletarian internationalism. This is why it is widely being studied in Japan and in other parts of the world and is giving an impetus to the popular struggle in all countries.

People's Power Organs

In his talk, President Kim Il Sung said, "Our people's organs of power consider it their basic mission to serve the interests of the people. This is their main characteristic. We put forth the slogan: 'The organs of power are the servants of the people'. In other words, they serve the people." His words were very instructive to all of us, the governors of local autonomous bodies in Japan.

I think that the thoughts on the function and role of local power organs and the part played by the county are an embodiment of the prodigious theories of President Kim Il Sung. Perhaps this is a model in the building of socialism that will suit any socialist state?

If time permits I would like to visit the DPRK once more and talk with him about this question.

Establishing Juche in the field of education poses a very important problem.

As he had emphasized time and again, education is revolutionary work and the educationist is a revolutionary, therefore, the institution of Juche into education is considered a most important question in Korea.

Adhering to Juche in school education means that education is given with the stress laid on what is Korean, and not mechanically copying foreign things. It is emphasized in education that one should think with one's own brain and hold fast to one's stand in everything.

In Korea such a splendid system as to serve the people, develop things loved by the people and effectively utilize the resources of their country has been instituted in the spheres of culture, the arts, science and technology as well as in education.

Another thing that impressed us so decidedly was the fact that all the people, from top to bottom, are striving to study. It has become a daily routine and habit to spend over two hours every day on studies in order to acquire comprehensive knowledge.

What is most significant is that the entire people are educated to love labour, while education is closely combined with productive labour. Study while you work, and work while you study–this is the basic form of education in Korea.

And education aims to make all pupils and students acquire more than one technique and to play more than one musical instrument.

When we called at the Pyongyang Tonghung Girls' Senior Middle School, we were told that all the pupils were able to play on the *kayagum* and other national instruments as well as piano, cello, violin, flute and other Western musical instruments.

For the Promotion of Friendship and Solidarity between the Japanese and Korean People

On the occasion President Kim Il Sung also touched on questions of the Korean citizens in Japan and the promotion of friendship and solidarity between the Korean and Japanese peoples.

He expressed his gratitude to the Japanese people for their positive support to the righteous actions of the Koreans in Japan for defending their democratic national rights, such as national education, visits to the homeland and for an independent peaceful reunification of the country.

The voices demanding the promotion of friendship, such as the formation of the "Dietmen's League for Promotion of Japan-Korea Friendship" in Japan, and the improvement of interchange and a normalization of state relations between the Korean and Japanese peoples, are rising up louder and extensive movements are being formed for their materialization. He spoke highly of these facts and referred to the fundamental stand towards and future prospect of the improvement of Korea-Japan relations.

As the President pointed out, it is the unfriendly, hostile policy of the Japanese government toward Korea that obstructs the improvement of Japan-Korea relations and the normalization of diplomatic relations between the two countries. Therefore, in order to promote the Japan-Korea relations, it is urgent, above all, to change this policy. At the same time it is necessary to practically expand economic, cultural and personal interchange in an all-round way.

When we suggested the establishment of fraternal and brotherly relations between cities, as a link in the endeavours to improve relations and deepen friendship between Japan and Korea, for instance,

between Yokohama of Japan and Hamhung of Korea, Niigata and Chongjin and the invitation of the Chairman of the Pyongyang City People's Committee to Japan, the President approved our proposals fully.

He added that the tour of the Korean art troupe to Japan, which was requested by the Japanese side, and the exchange and mutual visits of Korean and Japanese teachers and students would also be recommendable.

Rich Fruition of the Juche Idea Everywhere

We witnessed the great vitality and rich fruition of the Juche idea wherever we went in the DPRK. We were struck with admiration at the fact that this country, now grown into a socialist industrial state, was making such dazzling progress and development in all branches of socialist construction.

Broad avenues lined with verdant green belts, the workers' residential districts smothered in green foliage, factories and plants in full operation, the brilliant progress of construction and technology and the further consolidation of education and schools–everything is marked with independence, accurate planning, and renovation, leaping forward with soaring spirits.

We could clearly see in such a pulsating reality that the entire Korean people respect President Kim Il Sung from the bottom of their hearts and are united as a family around their President.

Our stay in Korea was too short a time for us to get a sound understanding of the socialist construction in Korea.

What has enabled the Korean people to attain the achievements we see today on the ruins brought about by the US troops?

He said, "Indeed, we built new towns, villages and factories on the ashes where there was absolutely nothing left." This is the brilliant result of the line of building self-supporting economy, the line put into practice by the President for the first time in history.

As for Pyongyang, of which the Korean people boast as the "capital of the revolution", it was so wonderful that one could hardly recognize the city which had once been completely razed to the ground during the Korean war.

The whole city was covered with verdure–the trees along the roadside, the trees and bright flowers in the parks. It looked more as if the city was in a big park, instead of the parks being in the city.

Everywhere fine roadside trees were growing in ranks on both sides of the highways, forming green tunnels of thick foliage, wonderful scenery which I would like to show you, Japanese readers. Our car seemed to be running through a tunnel made out of trees.

The high buildings of Pyongyang were usually of five to eight storeys of modern apartment houses. They were being rebuilt in a new, modern fashion, they said. The workers' apartment houses stood out wonderfully among them.

We looked into their interiors: a flat had two or three rooms in general, but the rent, including electric and water rates, was only three percent of the income. This was a real surprise to me.

By a cursory estimate, their living standard was on the level of a Japanese family with a monthly income of 150,000 *yen*.

The establishments in town and village were clean and tidy; the politics pursued and everything we had seen were pure and sound. So would the people's minds be in this country.

People's Minds, Towns and Villages Are All Clean and Sound

Let me add one more thing about the countryside of Korea. Because the progress in the countryside was so eye-opening.

At present the three major tasks of the technical revolution are being successfully carried out in line with the decisions of the Fifth Congress of the Workers' Party of Korea. One of them was to free women from household chores and to do away with the distinctions between urban and rural inhabitants by raising the standards of the farmers in all spheres of their working, living conditions and cultural lives.

Irrigation and electrification have already been completed in the countryside of Korea. Now electric power is being amply used in farm work.

Every farm village in the mountain areas is linked with the power grid and the bus service line; it has modern houses and cultural establishments.

When the car was passing the rural districts, I could see well-tended dry and paddy fields of cooperative farms stretched out on both sides of the road. (In the Korean countryside the land has been collectivized and they call it a cooperative farm.)

Unlike the small plot seen in Japan, every plot here is large and well-rezoned so that I could see tractors and sowing machines at work there in cooperation.

Korea's agriculture was making a big stride ahead, taking on a completely new look which won the admiration of Mayor Kanazawa of Yamagata City and Mayor Koyama of Ueda City who are agricultural experts as they came from peasant stock.

For example, soil improvement, the zoning and the levelling of the fields have been done in a combined way, and irrigation is particularly very fine.

I mentioned the man-made reservoir in the first part of this report; large reservoirs have been built everywhere in great numbers. Unlike the ordinary kind built by damming the stream of a river, the large artificial lakes have been created on hills hundreds of metres above sea level by pumping water up from the river which flows in the lowland with an electric motor through several stages of pumping stations.

In the rainy season these reservoirs contain water and sluices open in the dry season to irrigate the dry and paddy fields. When rice transplanting begins water fills the irrigation channels across the country.

This water flows to every nook and corner through dense networks of waterways, which are spread over the whole territory like the blood vessels covering the human body.

In addition, the artificial lakes are good for breeding fish and help to add beauty to the land, making it more picturesque, so we can say it serves more than two ends.

Together with the agricultural problem, I must not forget to mention the excellent medical care in Korea.

In Korea priority is given to preventive medical care. This means preventing diseases positively, instead of taking the trouble to cure a patient after he has fallen ill.

In line with this policy, the medical workers all over the country work under the section doctor system; a doctor assumes full responsibility for the health of the inhabitants of a definite section. I thought this was a

system worthy of the country of Juche.

Of course, the state looks after everything with its own responsibility, and the medical treatment is free in Korea.

For the Independent Peaceful Reunification of Korea and Solidarity with Peoples of All Countries

Saying that "We have basically overcome our difficulties in socialist construction," the President continued that there still may be difficulties on the road ahead, but because we have laid a firm independent economic base we are convinced that we can now develop our economy faster.

After having explained the fact that a "5-day work week" is applied in some countries, I asked, "What are you going to do in Korea?"

With the growth of economy and the enhancement of the people's living, I thought, Korea would naturally be going over to the "5-day work week".

But, the President said distinctly, "Mr. Asukata, we have not the least intention of introducing the 5-day work week in our country".

It is true that socialist industrialization had been completed and the people's living standards had become stabilized in the northern half of the Republic.

However, south Korea is still under US army occupation, the country has to be reunified and the south Korean people are suffering misfortunes and hardships.

Therefore, the Korean people must drive out the foreign forces and achieve national reunification as soon as possible. In order to attain this, no slowing down should be tolerated both in construction and production.

Now, to the people in the northern half of the Republic even the production of a nail, the building of a factory and the increased production of textiles and food grains are not only for their own comfortable lives: their thoughts always turn to their compatriots in the southern part of the country and they are striving to bring about the morn of national reunification even earlier, when the south Korean people will be delivered from their misery and the people of north and south Korea will push

ahead with construction with united efforts.

Many people of Africa and Latin America are waging an arduous struggle on their road to independence and construction.

When all these matters were taken into account, it seemed to me that it was impermissible to choose such an egoistic, easy course like the "5-day work week".

We are satisfied with a 6-day work week, he added.

Listening to his clear-cut statement, I could see the President's principled and resolute stand in relation to the building of socialism and national reunification in Korea and furthermore his international solidarity with the people of all countries. And this impressed me profoundly.

Already one year has passed since I met dear President Kim Il Sung during my visit to the DPRK for the first time as the mayor of Yokohama City, as a Japanese mayor. Looking back on those days, everything comes back to me with fresh emotions.

A signal progress had been made in the international situation, not to mention in Korea, in this one year.

The Supreme People's Assembly of the DPRK, held in December 1972, had adopted the Socialist Constitution and Premier Kim Il Sung was elected the President of the country in accordance with the newly adopted Constitution.

A big advance was registered in socialist construction in Korea, too. The Second Session of the Fifth Supreme People's Assembly held last April adopted the law on enforcing universal 10-year compulsory education plus one year preschool education enforced in September last year within the Six-Year Plan period.

The introduction of universal 11-year compulsory education up to the senior middle school stage is an epochal event rarely seen in the world. This is one of the fine indices denoting the stage of the building of socialism in Korea.

Further, a progress of historic importance is observed in relation to the north-south reunification; this is pleasing to us as well as to the Korean people.

The historic north-south joint statement was issued in Korea on July 4, 1972 following high-level contacts between the north and the south last year. This was followed by the Red Cross talks and the Coordination Commission meetings held in Pyongyang and Seoul alternately. Concrete ways of interchange and cooperation between the north and the south, the easing of tension and arms reduction had entered the phase of dialogue.

However, the north-south dialogue is only a beginning and, owing to the insincere attitude of the United States and the south Korean authorities, the agreed provisions of the north-south joint statement have not been realized, and the tension and military confrontation along the Military Demarcation Line still exist.

Now that the negotiations for friendship and peace are afoot to establish fraternal relations between Yokohama and Hamhung, between Niigata and Chongjin, harbor cities of Japan and Korea, Pusan and Phohang in the southern half of Korea are becoming ever more militarized and military provocations are regularly being made under the name of a so-called anti-air raid exercise. This is really regrettable, and cannot be interpreted otherwise than as a challenge to rapprochement, reunification and peace.

Under such circumstances the Supreme People's Assembly of the DPRK, held in April 1973, adopted the decision, "On ending foreign interference in our internal affairs in order to expedite the independent peaceful reunification of the country".

The session analysed the situation in the country after the north-south talks, demanded an end to foreign interference, withdrawal of the US troops from south Korea and the dissolution of the "UN Commission for the Unification and Rehabilitation of Korea" and called upon the parliaments and governments of all countries the world over to support the just cause of the Korean people for the independent peaceful reunification of the country against the interference of the United States in its internal affairs.

Needless to say, the proposal which reflected the sincere attitude of the Government of the Republic toward a north-south detente and the independent peaceful reunification of the country and its unshakable faith was welcomed by the world's people as well as the north and south Korean people.

The international status of the DPRK is rising with more and more countries recognizing it recently and people are more and more clamouring for the withdrawal of the US troops from south Korea and a repeal of the unfair UN resolutions on Korea. I think these will have a good influence on the reunification of north and south Korea.

We, who persistently stand by the just struggle of the Korean people for national reunification, support the proposal and appeal of the DPRK to put an end to foreign interference in Korea and to achieve the independent peaceful reunification of the country, and will redouble our efforts to implement them.

The Japanese government ought to abandon its one-sided policy in favour of the United States and south Korea, adopt a fair policy toward north and south Korea and strive to contribute to the independent peaceful reunification of the Korean people. Moreover, it should not maintain its attitude of collusion with south Korea and of hostility toward the Republic as before but should reflect on its attitude in the UN.

It should abandon its unfriendly and hostile policy toward the DPRK and strive to establish normal diplomatic relations between Japan and Korea by improving relations on the basis of the five principles of peaceful coexistence including mutual equality. This alone will meet the interests of both nations and greatly contribute to peace in Japan and the rest of Asia.

Some of the questions we had raised on the promotion of friendship between Japan and Korea during our visit a year ago still remain unsolved.

Many public figures and delegations of Japan, including the delegation of socialist mayors, are enjoying stupendous hospitality, invited by the DPRK. It is something to be thankful for and, at the same time, is embarrassing.

We are doing our best to gain the entry of the Chairman of the Pyongyang City People's Committee into Japan and to send the second delegation of the Association of Socialist Mayors to Korea.

The Highest Honour in My Lifetime

Yoshida Masao, Former Mayor of
Kameda, Hokkaido

Reception Day–May 14, 1972

I visited the Republic as a member of the delegation of the Japan National Association of Socialist Mayors from the 9th to the 15th of May 1972 and witnessed the successes of socialist construction in different fields. My visit to the Republic lasted only one week but that week was a very impressive one.

Particularly the reception by President Kim Il Sung was the most memorable, happiest, honourable event in my lifetime.

When leaving Japan we hoped to meet President Kim Il Sung. On arrival in the Republic we saw achievements in industry, agriculture, education, culture, the medical services, the arts and other spheres and admired the construction carried out at an enormous rate in so short a time on the ruins to which the country had been reduced in the three years of war provoked by the US imperialists. I particularly realized that the President's Juche idea had penetrated all parts of the Republic and was embodied in all fields of socialist construction.

I became more eager with each passing day to meet President Kim Il Sung and to hear him speak. Our desire was gratified on May 14, the day before our return home.

In the morning that day we flew in the helicopter sent by the President from our hotel to the guest house near an artificial lake, the place of the interview. The blue lake, hemmed in by green mountains, was calm and beautiful. A white building stood by the lake. It was the guest house where the President was to meet us. The President was on his tour of field guidance.

On arrival there we waited for the President to arrive, standing in a row before the entrance hall of the guest house. After a while a car

pulled up in front of us and a man got out of the front seat. Cadres usually sit in the rear, and the President will now get out, I thought. At the sight of the man approaching us so leisurely the idea flashed in my mind that he was the President.

The President came straight to greet us, grasping our hands one by one with a word of welcome. His grip was hearty and soft.

At first we felt rather awkward. But when we went to the reception room on the second floor and had exchanged a few words with him, the tension had vanished even before we realized it and we felt as if he had embraced us. The President invited each of us to smoke. I gave up smoking long ago, but took a cigarette, deeming it impolite to decline, and smoked after a 15-year interval.

We already had had lunch on our way, but the President treated us to some Korean rice-cake. It was so soft that even the old folk could eat it.

Fortunately, I took a front seat at the reception, facing the President and talked with him much more than anyone else.

Before leaving Japan I had studied the personality of President Kim Il Sung in my own way and had heard many stories from my friends from Chongryon, so I had an idea of what he was like. When I met him though, I found that he was more gentlemanly, modest and kindhearted beyond my imagination. I thought he was a man of the top world class.

As a mayor I proposed that sister relations between Kameda and some city of the Republic be set up for an exchange of experience in fishery, agriculture in a cold climate, the economy and technology, and gained his high approval.

I talked much about education since I had long been engaged in educational administration.

I told the President about my visit to a certain female senior middle school. The director of the school had said to me with twinkling eyes:

"Our respected Comrade Kim Il Sung gave educationists the high title of a revolutionary. Education is most important revolutionary activity. We teachers take a great pride and honour in being engaged in education."

I was very moved to see not only the director but also the teaching staff and all the students of the school working so hard.

The President liked my story and said, "In work among people the first process of revolution and construction is to educate and remodel people. Education is an important link in the chain of work among the people. So I say that educational work is not merely a profession but a noble revolutionary activity."

He pointed to the need to push ahead energetically with the technical revolution as well as the ideological revolution to expedite socialist construction and said that in the Republic all the students acquire at least one technique before completing their compulsory education. He said by way of a joke that such a person as he does not possess any technique.

The President laughed aloud when the head of our delegation said, "You have the best technique. You have the technique of building such a good country, haven't you?"

The DPRK is famous in the world not only as a "model socialist country" but also as a "country of education". In the Republic not only regular schools are run but also the educational system of study-while-you-work such as the college of engineering and correspondence education is widely introduced. Students account for about one-third of the population. This type of country cannot be found anywhere else in the world.

The entire people study daily for two hours after work and cadres study regularly on Saturdays. In addition to Saturday studies there is a study system by which cadres study one month in school a year, discontinuing their jobs temporarily. In this way all the people study.

Since the habit of studying has been built up in this way, President Kim Il Sung's Juche idea has spread all over the country and the entire people, united behind the President with one mind in consciousness of their being masters of the country, are giving full scope to their conscious enthusiasm, creativity and positiveness. The country has been built up with the implementation of President Kim Il Sung's Juche idea which has it that man is the most powerful being and that man is the key to success in the revolution and construction.

Children are valued in the Republic as the "kings of the country". I was greatly impressed at the great solicitude the President showed for the rising generation when I visited the Pyongyang Students and Children's Palace. I realized that it was a manifestation of President

Kim Il Sung's idea that revolution ought to be continued through the generations.

Hence, the universal 10-year compulsory senior middle school education was introduced in 1972 in the Republic, a large number of nurseries and kindergartens were built and children receive collective education from their birth.

Owing to this education men of a new type appear as befits a new society whose motto is "one for all and all for one".

Whatever country I visit, I pay primary attention to the young people and children in that country as I was an educationist. My impression of the young people and children in the Republic is that they are disciplined and merry, without any worries. I envied this extremely.

For example, when our car passed by any children, they raised their hands in the Children's Corps salute. When there are more than two pupils, they formed a row and all of them raised their hands. The pupils who seemed to be on an excursion walked in step with each other.

The streets were clean. This is attributable to the thorough education given to them in their tender years, I think. A journalist was sharpening his pencil to be able to write with on a visit to a middle school in the Republic. On seeing this, a schoolboy ran up to him and extended his cupped hands to receive the shavings, I was told. I believe it's a fact.

Children behaved well, were dressed neatly and were merry. The smiling children who danced in ballet or a Korean dance were lovely to look at.

I will not dwell on the Students and Children's Palace, for much has been written about it. In brief, it is well known that the independence and personal qualities of the children are developed there to the full.

At school a thorough basic education is given and great effort exerted to technical education and to the cultivation of an aesthetic sense.

The sight of these young people and children in the Republic who were so disciplined, well-mannered and merry, without any worries, made me think about the educational situation in Japan.

At the reception President Kim Il Sung said that the Yankee-style education would not do for them. I entirely agreed with him on this point.

Another good impression I received from Korea was that the streets were well laid out.

The streets of Pyongyang gave an illusion that the whole of Pyong-

yang was an enormous park in which high-rise buildings were built.

Kameda city presents a so-called "city under construction" with the rapid growth of its population. I intended to make Kameda a city of verdure and sunlight also and am striving to do so, but I find it very difficult in practice. The sight that spread before my eyes here seems to be what I have dreamed of. I could only admire it. Someone said that the green city of Vienna and Marronnier boulevard in Paris are well known but they were nothing, compared with Pyongyang. That is true.

The streets were wide and the trees lining the streets were fine. Wherever I went I found streets in verdure and buildings standing in rows. On both sides of the streets there were belts of full-blown flowers and the balconies of apartments were arrayed with potted flowers. All the streets were clean with no wastepaper scattered around. They were so clean that we were induced to put cigarette butts into our pockets after smoking them.

President Kim Il Sung always mixes with the workers, farmers, children, students, the old men and women and listens to their opinion and explains state policies to them. In this way he enlists the whole nation in the construction. This is the famous field guidance. It was quite different from the way the bureaucratic direction people at the top acted, just talking and doing nothing.

The basic idea of the Japanese constitution is that sovereignty rests with the people. Always thinking to base city policy on this idea, I made some efforts in my own way. I met and talked with citizens, arranging "mayor rounds" or talks on the spot, and strove in my own way to make the inhabitants enhance their sense of self-government and voluntarily take part in the implementation of the city policy.

This self-made method was not comparable to the President's field guidance but, visiting Korea, I gained confidence in the method of penetrating to the minds of the inhabitants.

Another thing I learned from the President's guiding method is the method of creating a "positive example" in one spot, and having it accepted over the country. I called this method "example setting".

On my return home I want to build trunk roads stretching in different directions and roads that are closed to cars. I also want to build primary and secondary schools, nurseries, kindergartens, general stores, hospitals and post offices. I want to lay out a housing estate in greenery

before anything else. Showing this model estate as an example, I intend to build a large good housing estate with the positive cooperation of the inhabitants of the suburbs of the city.

As you know, in Hokkaido hundreds of thousands of drafted Korean people were forced to slave in coal mines, and many of them died. Many Koreans perished not only in the coal mines but while building railways and banks. So many of them died that each sleeper of the railways could be said to be laid with the dead bodies of Koreans. So I, a Japanese, visited the Republic a bit conscience-smitten and with some penitence.

I cannot say, "It does not concern me, because it was perpetrated by the militarists."

Nevertheless, at the reception President Kim Il Sung uttered no word of reproach and, calling us close friends, suggested working devotedly for peace in Asia in cooperation with the Japanese people.

His magnanimity and boldness fortified me. I strengthened my resolve to promote friendship and solidarity between the two nations, to normalize diplomatic relations between the two countries and to live on good terms with Korea, a neighbour country in Asia.

When our delegation made the proposal of setting up sister relations between different cities of Japan and those of Korea, the President approved it right away.

I want to exchange processing techniques of marine products and fishing machinery with a sister-city of the Republic, import raw materials from the Republic and build industries free from environmental pollution, namely, the wood processing, light metal and precision machine industries.

I want to learn agricultural techniques since the climate of Hokkaido is similar to that of the Republic. The watering of dry fields, electrification, irrigation and mechanization here is on a very high level. I think we can offer the Republic the experience in and techniques of fruit growing and agriculture in a cold climate.

There are modernized chicken plants in different parts of the Republic. I also want to learn from them. I was impressed by the large size of vegetable and fruit growing in the polyethylene-sheet-covered hotbeds. They were so large that a lorry could pass through them.

Needless to say, it is impossible in our country to adopt perfect poli-

cies concerning the three major tasks of technical revolution, the emancipation of women and others, as the social system is different, but I want to introduce the techniques and experience which can be employed in the present conditions to improve the living standards of the citizens and to promote their welfare.

Kameda is by no means a big city but it is a lively and prosperous new city. Taking advantage of different occasions, I want to contribute to the promotion of the exchange and friendship between Japan and Korea by developing the exchange and friendship with the DPRK in different fields.

The DPRK is a prosperous country which was founded by the unexcelled leader President Kim Il Sung in arduous struggle, and where the great Juche idea is implemented everywhere. Therefore, it will continue on its vigorous onward march of Chollima in the future as it did in the past.

I deem it the highest honour and happiness in my lifetime that I met such a great man as President Kim Il Sung and visited the DPRK where his idea is being implemented.

The President Looking the Same as 20 Years Ago

Ten Hideo, Member of the House of Councilors

Reception–September 1972

I first met President Kim Il Sung on the last day of our visit to Korea, which I made from the 2nd to the 10th of September 1972 with ten members of the 1971 society comprising socialist members of the House of Councilors elected to it for the first time. It was my first visit to Korea and my first interview with the President (the delegation was headed by Akekubo Shigemitsu).

It took place after the 4th of July, when the north-south joint statement on the reunification of Korea was issued.

The joint statement set forth the three principles of reunifying the country, namely, independently, peacefully and by a grand national unity. It was discussed with the then Pak "government" and was issued simultaneously in north and south Korea thanks to the unknown efforts of many people. The statement was of great significance.

The talk with President Kim Il Sung was held in his office, attended by all the ten members of our delegation.

I knew him from photographs and imagined him to be fair-complexioned and stout. But he was dark-complexioned, and he had a sonorous voice. At first I was bewildered on hearing his voice, but he made the impression of an open-hearted popular statesman.

As I was a journalist, I had interviewed the heads of different countries. He was the first who did not stand on ceremony and dignity.

Later I interviewed the south Korean "President" Jon Tu Hwan. He sat about five metres away from me. He spoke to me, looking down at me from a throne-like seat. He asked me suddenly, "You've been five times to north Korea, haven't you?" I had not kept any detailed record of my interviews. Later I found that I had visited it five times. His sudden

question was so high-handed that it prompted me to give a detailed account of interviews later.

Sitting close to us, with an interpreter in between, President Kim Il Sung talked as he usually did in the reception room. Those who think ill of the President qualify him as a "dictator", but a dictator does not look like this, in my opinion.

The interview with the President began at about 11 o'clock in the morning. After talking for an hour we were about to leave when the President said, "Now let's have lunch", and led us into the next room, where he invited us to have lunch at a round table.

We were to fly back to Japan on that same day. He asked us, "What is the result of your visit?" We had a frank talk over lunch.

I, a journalist, posed a provocative question to him: "Wherever I go I hear people say 'This dam was built under the guidance of our leader President Kim Il Sung', 'This orchard came into being because during the war the leader instructed us to plant an orchard after the war and gave guidance' and the like. All are attributed to 'President Kim Il Sung's guidance'. President, when did you study such techniques?"

At this the President shook heartily with laughter and said, "The farmers taught me that their conditions were good and that fruit trees grew well, and the builders taught me that if a dam is built there impounded water can be used for irrigation. I went there to see and only then decided on it."

His candid answer to my provocative question made me feel more friendly towards him.

Further, the President spoke without reserve about the plants, the Korean war and criticized the United States.

The next time I met the President was on July 6, 1975, when I visited Korea as a member of the Tade Kenjiro-led Korea-visiting delegation of the Special Committee of the Japan Socialist Party for the Measures for the Korean Question. Then we gained valuable experience, travelling by train for 25 hours from Beijing.

I interviewed President Kim Il Sung on July 13 in a rest home by an artificial lake. We went there, riding in several cars.

The interview was attended by Mr. Kim Yong Nam from the Government (the then head of the International Department of the Workers'

Party of Korea). I will again refer to him. As I was already acquainted with him, I could speak frankly. Then there were a few versed in the Korean question in our delegation, so I spoke much.

President Kim Il Sung did not stand on ceremony in the least towards our big delegation and was open-hearted and modest. Those who met the President for the first time were very surprised by this.

Later I visited Korea for five days, from the 27th of November 1975. That time I had a talk with Mr. Kim Yong Nam whom I mentioned above, and did not meet President Kim Il Sung. It was immediately after the return of the Eda Saburo-led socialist delegation from the United States, so there was the need to meet Mr. Kim Yong Nam as early as possible, and exchange opinions about the international situation.

I again visited Korea in 1991 and met the President for the third time. This happened in July of that year. Ishii Hajime, the Chairman of the Dietmen's League for the Promotion of Japan-Korea Friendship, led its supra-party Korea-visiting delegation comprising 26 Dietmen from different parties, except the Communist Party, and 320 prefectural Dietmen, 346 men in all. I, Vice-Chairman of the League, was deputy head of the Korea-visiting delegation. We flew by a special jumbo passenger plane.

At first I wondered if we would be able to meet the President as he was in Hamhung for guidance. However, word came that he invited us to come to Hamhung where he was. We flew there in three medium jet planes.

There I again met President Kim Il Sung after a long interval. I was impressed by him, now close to the age of eighty, shaking hands with all the members of the delegation comprising nearly 350 men. He said to me, "Glad to see you!" and to the others, "Welcome!", going around. It took some thirty or forty minutes. Then at the staircases of the room we all posed for a souvenir photograph.

Before lunchtime 26 Dietmen had a talk with him in another room.

I asked, "The international situation has greatly changed and the Japanese newspapers say that north Korea is isolated and the Soviet Union shows no concern. What do you think about it?" The President gave a very impressive answer:

"I think we should follow the change on the globe since we, too, live on the globe."

His remark is meaningful, I think.

The rumour was rife that the people in north Korea were underfed. It is, without doubt, a lie spread by the south Korean Central Intelligence Agency and Japan's public peace authorities. This was not true. It cannot be said that the people there lead a plentiful life and that commodities are greatly in excess of demand, but much more commodities are now on sale in the department stores than ten years ago. Refrigerators and TV sets are on sale, and a 45-storey hotel is under construction.

The impression I got of President Kim Il Sung this time was that he was very healthy and clear-headed even though he was close to eighty.

The President shook hands with each of nearly 350 men, posed for a photograph, talked about politics, took lunch with us, and drank *insam* wine, exchanging toasts while going around the five tables at which the Dietmen sat.

I shared a table with the President. It was so large that it was difficult to hear his voice but he spoke naturally, frankly.

I became acquainted with President Kim Il Sung twenty years ago, but I got the impression he was still as healthy as ever, even though he was eighty.

I hope President Kim Il Sung remain as healthy as ever and will continue his vigorous activity.

"Now All People Came to Eat Boiled White Rice"

Yasue Ryosuke, Director of
the Iwanami Bookstore

Reception Day–October 6, 1972

I had an exclusive interview with President Kim Il Sung on October 6, 1972. I stayed in the government's guest house by the beautiful irrigational reservoir, hemmed in by hills, in the suburbs of Pyongyang. In the morning of that day the President visited it and we talked for six and a half hours.

It was a clear autumn day. We talked about the successful development of agriculture, gazing over the reservoir. The President asked me, "Do you know what *ibap* means?" I shook my head. "I thought so. *Ibap* means boiled white rice. In former days only the royal family of the Ri dynasty ate it and even landlords did not always have it. That's why it's called *ibap* (food eaten by royal family). During the Japanese colonial rule it was the desire of our people to eat boiled white rice liberally at least once a year. They wanted to serve a bowl of boiled rice as a sacrificial meal at the funeral of their parents but couldn't afford it. The result was that they laid a bowl of boiled foxtail millet with a one-centimetre coating of boiled rice. But now all the people eat boiled rice."

I heard such remarks in different places. People said, "It was the cherished desire of our people to wear silks and eat boiled rice in a tile-roofed house. The desire was realized by our own efforts. We're not envious of the life of the landlords of the old days. Now that education up to a university level is given to us free of charge at state expense, the former landlords say they are better off than before." It did not seem to me that this was a falsehood.The President and many other people frankly admitted that there were a lot of deficiencies in the people's lives.

However, it is notable that food, clothes, housing, education and medical services, which are essential for the people's lives, are suffi-

ciently supplied. In the light of the past history, this gives firm confidence to the nation and makes them optimistic about the future. This can be said to find expression in the positive attitude towards international exchange and the detailed reunification proposal.

President Kim Il Sung gave exhaustive answers to the questions submitted by the editorial board. The questions and answers concerned different matters and were long, so I won't dwell on them here. What impressed me in his answers is that he did not hide that there were many internal difficulties in the Korean revolution. He spoke freely and inexhaustibly about what harm worship of the great powers and bureaucratism caused and what efforts were made to overcome them. At the luncheon he told an interesting story about the role of the intellectuals in socialist revolution, adducing an example.

He had plenty of confidence in the prospect of the reunification of Korea and yet had a cool view of it and, at the same time, made unexpectedly sharp remarks about it. I learned that the questions of national reunification and Japan-Korea exchange should be viewed in the light of the whole of Korea.

I was particularly impressed when the President hoped that the Japanese public opinion would give publicity to the voices of the south Korean opposition parties.

December 1972

Korea Has Brought About a Signal Change as a Sovereign State under the President's Guidance

Makieda Motohumi, Former Chairman
of the General Council of
Trade Unions of Japan (Sohyo)

Reception Day–November 16, 1972

I visited the Republic twenty years ago in 1972 on the occasion of the 60th birthday of President Kim Il Sung. Leading the delegation composed of ten educationists and five newsmen, I, the then Chairman of the Japan Teachers Union, visited Korea for about ten days to promote friendship and exchange in education. It was my first visit to Korea. I, Chairman of Sohyo, visited Korea, leading a delegation comprised of seven chairmen of trade unions in 1980 and, leading the 7-member delegation of the Japanese Committee for the Support of Korea's Reunification in 1986. Later I visited Korea again from July 25 to August 5, 1991, leading the 61-member Korea-visiting delegation of the Japanese Committee for the Support of Korea's Reunification by the "ship of Japan-Korea friendship", together with the Korea-visiting delegations of the Society for Japan-Korea Cultural Exchange and the Japan Teachers Union for the Study of the Juche Idea. Thus, I visited Korea four times.

Whenever I visited Korea I was surprised at the fast changes in the appearance of the Republic.

After having applied persistently for visa to the Japanese government since a visa with the inscription of Korea as the destination of my journey was not granted, for my first visit to Korea in 1972 I was obliged to fly to Moscow with the invitation from the Soviet Union and China to enter Pyongyang and return via Beijing and Hong Kong.

On arrival at Pyongyang I was most impressed by the rows of dwellings for workers built everywhere and by the workers working hard day and night to build a new Korea. As if symbolizing them, in the cen-

tral part of Pyongyang rose high the big bronze statue of President Kim Il Sung and the magnificent bronze statue of Chollima, which could be seen from any part of the city.

However, as we visited Korea some time later when they had begun to build a new Korea after healing the wounds of the war, there were unpaved roads in Pyongyang, to say nothing of the provinces. Pyongyang Hotel caught the eye as the hotel for foreigners, and the apartment houses for workers were 15-storeys at the most. Then I was struck by the revolution and construction based on President Kim Il Sung's Juche idea. This means to approach revolution and construction in one's own country adhering to the stand of rejecting dependence on others and of using one's own brains, believing in one's own strength and displaying the revolutionary spirit of self-reliance, thus solving all the problems for oneself on one's own responsibility. Construction based on the Juche idea, whose gist is Juche in thinking, independence in politics, self-support in the economy and self-reliance in national defence was making tremendous strides, drawing on the resources of Korea and using the brains and efforts of the Korean people.

That is how it was. When I again visited Korea eight years later, in 1980, I found it quite changed. The roads were paved everywhere, speed-ways stretched to provincial cities, and the splendid subway was in operation. Big apartment houses stood in rows. The Chairman of the General Federation of Trade Unions of Korea invited us to come again, saying, "Please come back in three years' time. Then you'll find our country more greatly changed."

Visiting Korea six years later in 1986, I found it a new country. Pyongyang bristled with 42-storey and other high-rise apartment houses, which shut off the view of the bronze statue of Chollima in places. It has become a modern city, resembling Shinjuku in Japan or New York in the United States. The Arch of Triumph and the Tower of the Juche Idea, the largest of its kind in the world, the magnificent Mansudae Assembly Hall, several times larger than the Japanese Diet building, the Grand People's Study House and other big buildings, which have changed the image of the city, have been completed one after the other, and the Koryo Hotel in which we stayed is a 45-storey building.

Korea, which had been backward and poverty-stricken for a long

time under the Japanese colonial rule, has been built to be the first socialist country in Asia in less than half a century after liberation, under the leadership of President Kim Il Sung, and has emerged on the international arena as a dignified sovereign state which does not suffer domination and interference by or subordination to any country.

Interview with President Kim Il Sung in 1972

We were taken to the government building, where President Kim Il Sung worked, and got off the lift where we were met by a smiling person who extended his hand to shake ours. He was President Kim Il Sung.

In Japan the Prime Minister used to have a Minister wait in a room for a while for an interview and then only make a dignified appearance. We were somewhat embarrassed, therefore, at the sight of the President who had come to meet us. I was greatly impressed at the thought that he was the person the Korean people held in such high esteem as their beloved father.

We posed for a souvenir photograph in front of the lift and were led by the President into the room for interviews.

When I congratulated him on his sixtieth birthday, he said jokingly, "Man at the age of sixty can be said to have passed his childhood as our country." So, relieved from the embarrassment we had felt at first, we had an hour-long friendly talk with him.

As we were a delegation of educationists, the topic naturally shifted to problems of education.

The President gave a coherent explanation of the principles of education of the rising generation on the basis of the Juche idea.

In Korea grown-ups were given a primary educational level in the literary campaign for over 2.3 million illiterates, the outcome of the Japanese colonial rule, to begin with. Some 500,000 technical cadres had been trained already by 1972. And further efforts were being made to make the whole nation intellectuals.

President Kim Il Sung went on to say, "As for the relations with Japan, historically friendly interchange between Japan and Korea continued for a long time. A good-neighbour relationship ought to be set up in future, I think, too. But I don't believe a good-neighbour relationship is

possible only when normal diplomatic relations are reached. Diplomatic relations will naturally be established if economic and cultural interchange continue. We'll certainly not beg for it, hanging our heads. We'll adopt the same attitude toward other countries as toward Japan. We'll not follow the begging policy. I think it would be better if Japan does not interfere in this affair. The reunification of north and south Korea is a matter to be settled only by the Korean nation in the north and in the south and interference in it is not to be allowed. The Japanese government's foreign policy toward north and south Korea will be decided by the Japanese government itself. Japan should not obstruct or act against the independent reunification of the Korean nation."

Interview with President Kim Il Sung in 1980

In September 1980, the year following the opening of the "2nd World Conference for Korea's Reunification" in Tokyo I visited Korea at the invitation of the General Federation of Trade Unions of Korea.

Since Sohyo was assigned the task to convene the world conference I, then the Sohyo Chairman, formed the preparatory committee of Japan and spent busy hours in those days for its successful convocation; because the Fukuda Cabinet, pressed by the Pak "regime", was resorting to various political intrigues and disturbances with a view to having the conference miscarry.

Particularly the last card that the Japanese government could play was to forbid the entry of foreign representatives, including the delegation of the DPRK. I had political negotiations with the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Justice and, finally, in order to provide the necessary conditions for its convening, handed in a written document promising that "No criticism would be voiced at the conference opposing the policies of the Japanese government." Only then was it possible to invite the 124 foreign delegates representing 11 international organizations and 59 states to enter. In my opening address to the world conference, I, on behalf of the Japanese preparatory committee, said:

"The Japanese government did not permit the entry of the DPRK delegation up to the last moment. As for the other representatives–they put you to humiliation, obstacle and unrest by demanding that we would not criticize the Japanese and the US governments and the Pak

'regime'. However, Japan is a democratic state and the freedom of speech and assembly is clearly laid down in its constitution. So I hope that you will strive to have this conference succeed by discussing the problems raised in a free, democratic way and unrestricted by any one. I will be held responsible for everything before the Japanese government."

The meeting hall shook with thunderous applause, and the shadow of unrest which had hung over it until then quickly dispersed, giving way to flooding brightness. After the conference was over, I was summoned to the Ministry of Justice, where I had an argument with them; they pressurized me to submit a written apology and I refused. Anyway, the world conference wound up successfully.

The following year I revisited Korea. So this was a significant event both to the visitor and the host. At the Pyongyang Airport hundreds of people and a brass band welcomed me warmly and in the reception room of the airport building the Chairman of the Central Committee of the GFTUK greeted me cordially and added, "Last night President Kim Il Sung called me suddenly and said 'Chairman Makieda was very busy in Japan so he cannot have had a proper rest. Let him have a good rest in a quiet place.' At his advice, your residence was shifted from the centre of Pyongyang to the guest house by a serene beautiful lake." That is how I was favoured with his special concern.

The conversation with President Kim Il Sung was held at the Pyongyang guest house for some two and a half hours, from five to seven-thirty in the afternoon of September 10. The last hour we talked at the dinner table.

Welcoming our Sohyo delegation, he said:

"I pay homage and express gratitude to Sohyo for endeavouring to expedite the independent peaceful reunification of Korea, rescue Kim Tae Jung and to democratize south Korean society.

"Kim Tae Jung is a Christian, known throughout the world. Jon Tu Hwan is going to kill him by making the false charge of his being a communist. He accuses many dissidents of being communists.

"The southern authorities intend to stop the American troops from withdrawing from south Korea on the false plea of a 'menace' from the north.

"We have no intention of invading the south. We do not want to force

socialism upon them either.

"Despite the complex situation in the world, the popular struggle is advancing in many countries. Following the Second World War a large number of colonies have won independence. The prestige of the United States has fallen low and its allies do not obey its orders.

"Japan is now developing relations with many third world countries. But she shouldn't violate their interests under this pretext. It's important to establish the principle of securing mutual benefit by means of a new economic order, instead of exploiting others through the channel of an outdated economic order. The only vulnerability to the third world and non-aligned states lies in that they do not have their own cadres– a leader and engineers of their own country. And they are misled by mysticism about techniques and a blind worship toward advanced states. So it's necessary to further inspire a consciousness of independence among them.

"The Korean and Japanese peoples are linked with the same fate".

At first, I expressed my thanks to him for having shown such particular attention to our delegation's stay in Korea, and then continued:

"I think it's true that the Republic is carrying on economic construction by enlisting the entire working force, therefore, it has no intention of invading the south.

"Last year I was in Kenya. I saw that the diverse construction projects that were being undertaken by Japan's economic aid there were being guided almost entirely by the Japanese. But in Korea the cadres and technicians are all Koreans.

"Our Sohyo opposes the overseas expansion of Japanese enterprise under the name of economic cooperation and the export of capital aimed at squeezing out profits. Instead of that the solidarity and technical cooperation with the workers of the third world and non-aligned states should be encouraged further.

"Why then does Sohyo support Korea's independent peaceful reunification and voice its solidarity with it? Because it is to help Korean people to accomplish their aspiration and realize peace and sovereign independence in the Korean peninsula so that Asian peace would be secure.

"Sohyo particularly supports Korea's independent peaceful reunification on three principles.

"Firstly, Sohyo strives to force the Japanese government to stop supporting the Jon Tu Hwan 'government', to make it break up the Japan-ROK tie-up and end Japan's hostile policy toward the Republic; secondly, it backs and encourages the struggle for the restoration of democracy in south Korea; thirdly, by arousing public opinion world-widely, it increases international pressure to oppose the 'two Koreas' policy and achieve Korea's independent peaceful reunification.

"To this end I should like to bring the '3rd World Conference', due in Algeria in November this year, to success in the wake of the '2nd World Conference for Supporting Korea's Reunification' that was held in Tokyo last November."

President Kim Il Sung said at the dinner table: "I spend many hours in field guidance. Because I can learn a lot of things from the workers. Since we listen to the broad opinions of the workers on the spot, no mistake is made in shaping a policy. A mistake always starts from subjectivism. And subjectivism is the first step to bureaucratism."

On this occasion I was served the President's favourite drink, a brew from the wild bean growing in the mountain areas. Pleasant hours passed in an amicable atmosphere.

I told him finally, "One could hardly picture a Prime Minister dining with a representative of the workers in Japan.

"The fact that I was invited to visit the Republic and drank wine with you, the President, like a friend, is an indescribably great honour to me. This will be remembered as a most meaningful event in my life."

I expressed my grateful feelings reverentially to him before making my farewells.

Interview with President Kim Il Sung

Okuyama Emiko, Former Director of
the Women's Affairs Department of
the Japan Teachers Union

Reception Day–November 16, 1972

The talks between President Kim Il Sung and our delegation started at 10:40 of November 16, 1972, on the last day of our sojourn.

When we stepped out of the lift following our guide, the President, who was waiting for us there, stretched out his hand toward us, smiling broadly. Indeed, he is the man the Korean people esteem and revere from the bottom of their hearts, this was what struck me deeply at the time. We had talks with the President with the attendance of the Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Director of the International Affairs Department of the General Federation of Trade Unions of Korea, and others from the Republic's side.

The talks proceeded for about an hour in a cordial atmosphere. We were not embarrassed in the least, despite our first meeting with him. In the beginning, he warmly welcomed the delegation of the Japan Teachers Union on its visit to Korea and expressed cordial thanks to the prefectural teachers unions under the JTU for having sent him congratulations and gifts in honour of his 60th birthday last April 15.

"I know very well," he continued, "that in Japan the Japan Teachers Union always supports the national education of the children of Koreans in Japan, and strives for free travel between Japan and Korea. I'm grateful to you for this. I hope that the educationists of Japan and Korea will maintain their relations of friendship and amity."

At this, Chairman Makieda first thanked President Kim Il Sung profoundly for his having shown particular concern to the delegation of the Japan Teachers Union now staying in Korea. Then he continued: "We're moved by your high appreciation of our movement in Japan. Ever since it was formed in 1947 the Japan Teachers Union has struggled steadfastly for the peace, independence and democracy of Japan and has endeavoured tirelessly to train the Japanese who will never ignite a war of aggression

again. However, the Japanese government does not recognize Korea as yet. The moves toward a revival of militarism in Japan are an indication that there is much to be desired yet in our struggle. We think this over seriously. We are going to promote our courageous movement still more from now on."

His reply added much towards furthering the friendship and solidarity between the two sides.

Our conversation turned to the education of children. We were given explanations by President Kim Il Sung, the founder of the Juche idea and the leader, about the principles of education based on the Juche idea of this country where priority is given to training the rising generation to be revolutionaries.

His explanations were something like a concluding and theoretical summation of what we had seen through our 9-day concrete inspection tour, mainly of educational establishments.

Education in Korea began with the campaign to rid the 2.3 million people of illiteracy caused by the Japanese colonial rule. Now the Republic has a large army of 500,000 native cadres and is exerting efforts to make the entire people intellectuals.

In the Republic education itself is considered revolutionary work. President Kim Il Sung emphasized, "What we must not forget is to struggle for the future of Korea, for the future of the youth. Educating the rising children now is an important undertaking to bring up the future generation, so that nothing must be spared for their training."

Listening to him I recalled the cheerful look of the children who were taking part in extracurricular activities happily at the grand Students and Children's Palace, which houses more than 500 rooms and laboratories plus the library, gymnasium, cinema hall and theatre in its 10-storey building occupying a vast area of 110,000 square metres in the centre of Pyongyang.

Then he referred to the plan to complete the universal 10-year compulsory senior middle school education, which was enforced from September 1972, in the five years to come, and then to further intellectualize the whole of society through colleges and universities.

He goes to every place–factory, school, workshop, rural village, creche and kindergarten–several times a year to guide the work on the spot or to have a chat with the people there. So he knows, like the palm

of his hand, what is going on in every corner of the country and how things stand in some particular village and what problems face those running a definite school.

Pointing to the universal 10-year compulsory senior middle school education which was put into force from September 1972, he said: "They say that in some county it will be realized within two or three years, instead of the five years. Of course, that may be possible there, I think. Considering this rate, it will come into effect earlier than expected, taking the country as a whole. But the question lies in a shortage of teachers. It's difficult to train teachers to keep up with this speed."

Although the shortage of teachers in the Republic is mentioned, they do not jam 40 to 50 pupils into a chock-full class. At primary school a class is formed with less than 30 pupils, and with 40 at a maximum at the senior middle school. Qualified teachers working in other branches have been called back to the schools, without any exceptions.

The conditions of teachers have improved greatly since 1969.

Owing to such measures, the universal 10-year compulsory senior middle school education will be enforced earlier than planned. For its successful implementation, it is required to give preparatory education at kindergartens, he said. Thus, he revealed his great enthusiasm about education.

Our talks lasted long in this way, centring on educational questions. Then he gave answers to three questions raised by our delegation; the normalization of diplomatic relations between Japan and Korea, the reunification of the north and the south and the constitutional amendment in the Republic.

April 1973

An Outstanding Leader

Iwai Akira, Director of Secretariate of
the General Council of Trade Unions of
Japan (Sohyo) and Chairman of
the Japan Committee for
Supporting the Independent
Peaceful Reunification of Korea

Reception–1972

1. Personality

I had an audience with President Kim Il Sung three times. To be brief, my impression was that he was an outstanding leader. He has an affable, popular character; he does not give himself any airs. He behaves just as he does when he is informally with workers and farmers out at factories and rural villages several times every year.

I remember it was in Onchon County near Nampho in 1972 that I met him for the first time. That was my first visit to the DPRK. After leaving the Osaka harbour aboard an approximate 200-ton class passenger-cargo boat I crossed the rough sea of Korea Straits and reached the Nampho harbour. It took two days, I recall. Today a large barrage and many quays have been built so that the Nampho port can accommodate several ships at a time. However, there was only one wharf then. When we arrived, a Polish ship was moored at the pier so that we had to wait out in roadstead off the port for six or more hours before landing. After such a journey, the word suddenly came that the President would receive me. I rushed to the meeting place before I was able to prepare for the occasion.

It was Onchon County, a county of spas, so I guessed there would be hot springs there. A building for visitors stood in the middle of a village. When we had passed through a thick wood, I saw sturdy President Kim Il Sung in a coat with a closed collar standing there. Smiling,

he grasped my hand. Although this was my first meeting with him, he was very kind and affable to me so that I felt no tenseness. It felt as if I had met an elderly neighbour.

As soon as we had exchanged greetings, we got into the President's Mercedes limousine. He was leaving on his field guidance tour to the newly reclaimed tideland. As the car entered the road which ran through the paddies undulating with golden waves of rice, a man who appeared to be a responsible worker of the cooperative farm there ran up to us. Getting out of the car, the President asked him unceremoniously, "How does the rice crop look this year?" "Every unhulled rice is as big and as hard as a nut," the man replied. "Really wonderful!" exclaimed the President, laughing heartily.

I asked the President, "What was done to wash out the brine from the former tideland?" "That's the secret of the enterprise," he responded with light laughter. Of course he was joking. Later I was told that seawater was desalted by fresh water. This alone suffices to show what his on-the-spot guidance is like. At the time I thought that a person like this must be rare who would meet workers and farmers the way he does, as the leader of the state. Then I was deeply moved. I believe that herein lies the reason why he is trusted and revered unconditionally by the people of the Republic today.

In 1978 I met the President again. This time I was received at the government building called the Kumsusan Assembly Hall. This grand building houses the President's office and the rooms for the reception of foreign guests, as well. Here the august banquet was held in 1989 in honour of the World Festival of Youth and Students.

As we entered the splendid entrance of the assembly hall, the President who was waiting for our arrival there welcomed us with open arms. At the time I, as a representative of the Japan Committee for Supporting Korea's Reunification, and four members of my delegation were granted an audience with him. The President dwelt, in a voice full of confidence, on the development of construction in socialist Korea. He also touched upon the policy taken by the Japanese government. What is still fresh in my memory is his figurative remarks about south Korea's relations with Japan and the USA. In the old days noblemen of Korea wore a *Kat,* a horsehair hat; in order to keep it on one's head one had to tie its two strings slung down from its hem under one's jaw. If one of the two

strings, by which he meant Japan, gets loosened the horsehair hat would dance in the wind. This would not be bad, he remarked. Our talks were followed by a luncheon at the banquet hall. The table was heavily laden with varied delicacies. We clinked glasses of Korean *insam* (ginseng) wine, wishing him good health. I glanced at him at that moment, sitting cross-legged in his chair. Sensing my glance, he said, "You'll excuse me. I'm accustomed to sit like this on the floor of my room at home."

He was such a kind person who is always keen on what others feel. I was entranced with his noble personality. During the conversation, I asked him, "Do you mind if I smoke?" "Do, please," he said, offering me a cigarette. "To tell you the truth, I also smoke. But my grandchildren are very serious about my smoking at home so I refrain as best as I can," he remarked with hearty laughter. He was, indeed, a gentle grandad. Probably he lives and rests with the children of Secretary Kim Jong Il. I pictured the President's life at home in my mind's eye.

However, he seemed to be very stern in official work. When I asked him a question, the President turned to the Chairman of the GFTUK, and asked, "Is that so, Comrade So-and-So?" The Chairman sprang to his feet and answered reverentially, "Yes, sir." This hinted at the strict relations between them. In the photographs of the President giving guidance to local areas we can often find cadres and Party officials jotting something down in their notebooks, standing behind him. This is a scene, I think, which falls pat to the words "our leader", a fond expression of the Korean people.

2. Achievements

President Kim Il Sung is held in high esteem among the Korean people. I am sure that the thinkers in the south revere him. From the age of 15 or 16 he had fought against the aggression of the Japanese imperialists and was the beacon of hope to the entire Korean people who were groaning under colonial rule, and was the supporting pillar in the minds of the Korean people who aspired after liberation from under the yoke of exploitation and oppression. The data compiled by the Japanese authorities at the time speak explicitly of this: the miserable

plight of the "punitive" force of the Japanese army or the armed police who took flight, beaten by the Kim Il Sung unit. After they had occupied Korea, the Japanese imperialists had requisitioned and shipped out a great deal of material resources and grains, even cows to Japan. Even the surnames of the Koreans, not to mention their mother tongue, were forbidden, and all manner of looting and suppression were perpetrated. The activities of General Kim Il Sung, who led the guerrilla struggle in those days, added power and courage to the entire Korean people.

Following his triumphal return to the homeland, General Kim Il Sung founded the Democratic People's Republic of Korea in 1948. At that time the Syngman Rhee regime, the "Republic of Korea", was rigged up in south Korea under the aegis of the American army. I think that General Kim Il Sung must have been angry over the fact that an all-Korea unified state was not established at the time. From that time on his determination grew still firmer to set the Juche idea, the idea of independence, self-sufficiency and self-reliant defence, as the basic policy of the country. Owing to the Juche idea, which demands that every policy should be based on the primary concern for man, the DPRK, the socialist state as we see it today, has been progressing.

During a period of three years, starting from 1950, all the industries, agriculture and dwelling houses were destroyed in the war of aggression launched by the "UN forces" represented by the US army. But they were rapidly rehabilitated and developed under the socialist system whose helm was taken by President Kim Il Sung and the Workers' Party. The productive forces made swift progress, thanks to the nationalization of industries and agricultural cooperativization. As a result, the export of industrial products multiplied rapidly, and Korea has also become able to export agricultural produce. As President Kim Il Sung pointed out frequently, "It is difficult to say that our country is rich. Yet it is progressing into a country where the people's livelihood is improving, a country which boasts of a fertile nature and housing environments nice to live in."

The US troops and nuclear weapons in the south are a constant menace to the existence of the power of the Republic, yet it will continue to develop in the future, too, to be a splendid socialist state by the efforts of the entire people united as firmly as rock around President Kim Il Sung and Secretary Kim Jong Il.

Already two years have elapsed since the negotiations for the normalization of diplomatic relations between Japan and Korea had started. If the Japanese government approaches the negotiations with a sincere apologetic attitude for the past criminal acts perpetrated by Japan's colonial policies, the talks will certainly come to a successful conclusion in the near future.

Japan and Korea are close neighbours. The two countries must coexist peacefully as neighbours and friends, disregarding whatever differences in their social systems, and promote their relations of friendship all through the generations to come.

On-the-Spot Guidance of President Kim Il Sung

Midorikawa Toru, the Former Executive Director of Iwanami Bookstore

Reception Day–September 19, 1973

I was received by President Kim Il Sung on September 19, 1973. I stayed the night before it at a state guest house. That morning the President was out for "on-the-spot guidance" to a nearby cooperative farm to inspect the newly built farmhouses there. I headed for the village at his invitation.

Two-storey red-brick houses stood in rows. There were nursery and kindergarten buildings as well as dwelling houses.

President Kim Il Sung, in company with the county and ri office workers, was waiting for me in front of a house. It was the third time that I had met him after the celebrations marking the founding of the Republic.

Almost in every place that I had visited–farms, schools, nurseries and health resorts–I was told about his "on-the-spot guidance". As I heard later, it is an honour hard to get to be present on one of his "on-the-spot guidance" tours.

President Kim Il Sung said, "The people of this village are very delighted that a Japanese guest has called on them together with me."

His "on-the-spot guidance" does not bear an atom of formality. It has nothing to do with the "Emperor's pine planting" which aims only at an ostensible effect. It is a common usage that if the head of state is out on an inspection the officials have a rehearsal in full dress to meet him. From the expression "on-the-spot guidance" which fell often from the lips of the people of this country one could imagine a ceremony or a dramatic occurrence. But, as I was present on this occasion, all these imaginations were blown up.

The President shook hands with the villagers and asked them various frank questions and listened to what they said. Then he made a

round of all the places there. When he was satisfied, he laughed heartily and praised them for their efforts. The village people did not feel shy with him nor were scared of him; they explained everything and gave their opinions. They spoke of their demands before he even had asked what they wanted. Then he assured them that he would solve the problems within the year. The conversation touched on concrete matters; the estimate of the grain harvest this year, construction, the height of the steps of a bus carrying children, etc. Sometimes he gave instructions on technical problems and in special fields.

The conversation was a man-to-man intercourse from beginning to end; it does not resemble some one-sided guidance from "up above".

From the days of the anti-Japanese guerrilla struggle, it was the basic tactics of President Kim Il Sung to rely on the people and arouse them in the revolutionary struggle for national liberation. While building socialism he had deepened these straight contacts with the people in the form of "on-the-spot guidance". Accordingly this "on-the-spot guidance" is nowhere to be seen in any other country so that they boasted of it in the talks with us.

The President gives advice in the following manner–here are some instances:

"How much timber was consumed in building these houses?"

"0.3 cubic metres per house."

"That's not much. That's very nice. Use timber as little as you can."

"This village is close to the sea and far from the mountains. You have to find new building materials to suit your conditions."

The room had furniture and other furnishings.

"Those make the room narrow. That furniture should be placed outside the living room. Or you'd better modify the blueprint to fix them, using the space in the wall, so that the people can live in a spacious room."

His advice continued even after he came downstairs.

The house consists of one room on the ground floor and another upstairs plus a kitchen and bathroom. Having shut the bathroom door he noticed the crevices and reproved the workers, saying, "That's because you used wet planks."

Upstairs, we were only the three of us–the President, I and the interpreter. A light breeze from the crop fields flowed in through the front

window and out through the back one.

"How wonderful! I can imagine a couple, with two or three children; the parents sleep downstairs and the children upstairs, or vice-versa.

"If the gap between towns and villages is getting narrower it would be much better to live in the countryside; the air is fresh and how delicious the fruit and vegetables are, gathered straight from the fields."

The nursery and kindergarten were furnished with small chairs, desks and beds befitting the respective age categories of the children. Straw mats were spread on the floor.

In this country, children are considered precious everywhere. The President was very keen on everything during the inspection. At the sight of the place for changing nappies at the nursery he asked, "Is that also necessary here?" in a tone as if he couldn't see the reason.

There was a playground in the centre of the village equipped with a swimming pool, volleyball court, table tennis facilities, etc. It looked like a small stadium.

As the villagers had said, after school the children all gather there to play. Looking around the playground, the President remarked with satisfaction, "Fine! You've built a splendid thing here." His "on-the-spot guidance" had now ended.

I headed for the place of the reception, riding in his car at his invitation.

Suddenly he said, "A nice model is required for the building of the farmhouses. All will imitate it and then nice homes will appear."

Beginning from the farmhouses and the nursery of a small village to a giant factory or Kim Il Sung University, he first gave "on-the-spot guidance" in order to invent ideal models of structures which they could build and meet the requirement in full on the level they had reached, and following these models, they are expanded further to the surrounding areas. In the case of the heavy industrial enterprises and schools, they are not confined to some local areas but have nationwide meaning. One multiplies into ten, ten into one hundred.

In consideration of this, we can say that the region of inspection is chosen in a planned way and the object selected rests on a comprehensive analysis. So he gives "on-the-spot guidance" to a backward region this time and to an advanced area the next time; sometimes he guides the underdeveloped and advanced regions on the spot at the same

time. Such on-the-spot guidance is repeated often. Thus, finally, he would be able to direct all the places in the country on the spot. These places would play the key role in the building of socialism. I wonder if herein lies the principal target of the on-the-spot guidance. Of course, this is my personal opinion. I had asked nothing about such a matter as methodology. But if I am not greatly mistaken his present-day original "on-the-spot guidance" has its root, I would say, in the tactics for the expansion of guerrilla bases–he had built and expanded guerrilla bases relying on the strength of the people–from the period of the anti-Japanese guerrilla struggle.

Everywhere farm villages with tile-roofed houses can be seen on a hillside or at the foot of a mountain, away from the fields. The red-brick houses I had seen just before were growing in number. Power lines have reached even mountain villages, setting every corner bright with electric light, and waterworks are under construction in the rural communities. Our conversation in the car continued on matters regarding agriculture and industry–the production of chemical fertilizers and the mixing rate of the nitrogen, potassium and phosphorus fertilizers; if an underdeveloped country is to progress, emphasis has to be made on industrialization which puts a burden on the countryside for a certain period. In particular, the President had a profound knowledge of chemical fertilizers and his explanations of technicality were generally very persuasive.

President Kim Il Sung gave replies to the written questions that I had raised on my arrival in the Republic for about two and a half hours.

Recognizing the fact that the Korean issue is at a great turning point of history internationally, I posed the following questions:

1. His retrospection and views on the future of the Republic on the occasion of its 25th anniversary;

2. About the role of the United Nations and his opinion;

3. On the problem of reunifying Korea and the proposal on the setting up of the Confederal Democratic Republic of Koryo;

4. On the progress of the Six-Year National Economic Plan;

5. Regarding Japan-Korea relations.

From beginning to end, President Kim Il Sung continued to talk with sincerity and deliberately. But when the question of "two Koreas" came up, his voice naturally rose and he glared.

Foreign visitors to this country learn afresh that almost all the people, kith and kin, are separated into the north and south, and cannot visit or correspond with each other. But our Japanese people know little about this. The reunification of Korea is the ardent desire of the Koreans who are split into the north and the south but it is also a question of pressing importance for the 700,000 Koreans living in Japan. Moreover, the Korean residents who live together with us in Japan are not allowed to visit north Korea excepting special cases permitted by the Japanese government, although they can travel freely to south Korea.

At the celebrations marking the 25th anniversary of the Republic the home-visiting delegation of representatives of the Korean nationals in Japan was accorded a warm welcome amid loud cheers by the people. The President and other leading personnel paid high tribute to their years-long endeavours overseas and lavished encouraging words on them. As one of the few Japanese representatives present on the occasion and witnessing all this, I engraved the scene in my mind.

After answers had been given to my written questions, a luncheon followed. However, our conversation continued there, too. More than six hours had already passed. What impressed me so much in these talks was that all his conversation on north and south Korean affairs and on internal and external affairs, were motivated by the national interests of the Korean people. It suddenly dawned on me that the President was permanently concerned about the people in south Korea, the people who, albeit not communists, strive for the reunification of the fatherland, regarding it as a task incumbent upon themselves.

When I visited the Kumgang Mountains, the Koreans there told me that they liked to see south Koreans enjoy the sights in those picturesque and wonderful mountains. This is a common desire of the Korean people, disregarding the difference of the regimes.

Parting with the President I had a chat with him on the interchange between Japan and the Republic. I said that the present growing cultural exchange and personal visits between our two countries are indebted largely to the one-sided efforts of the Republic and to have it developed bilaterally depends on how we Japanese people struggle for its realization. To this his answer was that, "Our Mansudae Art Troupe was much indebted to the Japanese public".

After the war Japan has made quite a number of mistakes in its

diplomacy; the conclusion of the "Peace Treaty" between Japan and the USA and the "Japan-US Security Pact" in 1951 during the cold war; the ensuing conclusion of the "Japan-Sino Treaty" with the Taiwan government, the revision of the "Security Pact" in 1960 and the signing of the "Japan-ROK Agreement" in 1965.

Diplomatic relations were reestablished between Japan and China.

But Japan has not as yet made any indemnification to the Korean people since 1905. Japanese diplomatic circles, however, had relinquished the possibility of negotiations with north Korea by concluding the "Japan-ROK Treaty". This autumn our government acted erroneously again in the UN. It seems to me that after the war our people have been living up to this day without a proper understanding of the history of the Korean people under the Japanese rule and of what's going on in north and south Korea. Furthermore, the mistaken policy pursued by successive Japanese governments toward Korea had intensified the division of Korea which came as a "present" of the Second World War, and thus they had become an object of national resentment.

Japanese people know better than anyone else that the Korean people are a homogeneous nation who are proud of their long history.

Unless Japan reshapes its Korea policy, there will be no end to the "postwar" headache in Japanese diplomacy. Then the Japanese people would never be able to wash away the great wrongs that had been committed up to the modern and contemporary histories since 1905.

What I have heard during these three weeks is no more than half a knowledge. Moreover, socialist construction is progressing rapidly with every passing day in this country.

Under the Bright Sun

Matsumoto Masatsugu, Chief Editor of
Miraisha Publishing Company Then;
the Kage Bookshop at Present

Reception Day–September 30, 1973

On the eve of our return home, September 30, 1973, Yada Kingitsiro, cameraman, and I received an unexpected invitation from President Kim Il Sung. Though this was my second visit to Korea little had I expected that I could meet him so easily. I, albeit a journalist, was not obliged to write anything the way newspaper or magazine reporters do. And I did not represent any political organization, either. In short, I was a free-lancer in my job. So what I wanted to do during my second visit was to talk with as many Koreans as possible and, if possible, I wanted to live with a family for a week or ten days. For instance, I avoided comparing this country to Japan in order to see what was better or what was worse or prying into its political system. Such a thing did not intrigue me. It was my hope to learn how the Korean people had traversed the thorny path in the past and how they live today, from the angle of their everyday life.

Previously, I had had the opportunity of shaking hands and chatting a bit with President Kim Il Sung when the mass meeting was held at the Pyongyang Indoor Stadium in honour of the 25th anniversary of the DPRK on September 8, and when the celebration banquet was given in the Mansudae Assembly Hall after the mass game was over in Nampho city on September 9.

The President, firmly grasping the hands of us free-lance guests, who were not of any official delegation, showed us kindness and asked about our health.

I listened to his speech for the first time at the celebration banquet. It was more of a conversation than a speech. His talks, which began with the words "comrades..." in every new context, were made in a serene, composed voice, instead of an agitated tone; it even aroused a kind, soft feeling in me.

For independent guests like me there was nothing more to be desired. But then I suddenly received that invitation.

It was a fine autumn day. There was an excited hint from the official concerned so I, too, being sensitive, could not help growing tense.

What should I say to such a great man? I was utterly confused since I was not accustomed to such a situation. After one p.m. we, accompanied by the Chairman of the Korean Society for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries, left the guest house. "Let's look around the orchard," he said. Our car meandered through the large orchard and fields.

I wondered if he intended just to ease our minds or to kill time. My guide said that President was giving on-the-spot guidance at a nearby farm. Before long we arrived in Sariwon city. I rested in the hotel where I had had a meal once during my first visit to this country. Around 5 p.m. we drove further and reached a cosy house in the quiet mountains, which looked like a guest house or a rest home. Dusk had already set in the place, which was surrounded by a compact forest.

The President was standing in the yard as I got out of the car. An exchange of handshakes and greetings, and then we posed for a souvenir photo.... Frankly speaking, I was too tense because it was beyond my wildest imagination that I would meet the esteemed leader of the Korean people. At first he seemed to try to talk with us while we were outdoors, but the late autumn evening was chilly so we went to a reception room. His words given below are based on the memos I made and Yada. We cut out our answers to his questions in the talks.

We had interviewed the President for three hours; about one hour and twenty minutes in the reception room and one hour and forty minutes while dining. Needless to say our tenseness melted away from the very beginning. He laughed unreservedly and gaily and spoke openheartedly, with humor and gesturing. We were instantly attracted to him and relaxed. The President helped us to cigarettes and lighted them personally. At the table he cordially told us which spices were good for seasoning our food. This kindness undermined my prejudice towards "politicians". I felt that I could now see why the Koreans call the President their father. The three hours were really so interesting that I hadn't noticed the passage of the time. As the interpreter followed his words

almost simultaneously we felt as if we were talking directly with him. So now–our notes:

"Today we won't discuss any special questions. Let's talk frankly as friends do. I heard that you've visited the Kumgang Mountains via Wonsan city. That must have been a wonderful journey, I'm certain. It is best to ascend as far as Kuryong Falls on foot. There aren't many hotels in the Kumgang Mountains, we haven't built enough of them yet. But we're going to construct more hotels in future. The young people are said to enjoy camping in tents. That's pleasant and it's good for their health, I'm sure. In the old days there were only the villas and brothels for landlords and capitalists. Today there are a lot of health resorts in northern Korea. When you come the next time, you had better travel there.

"But in the northern area it becomes chilly early and often snow falls in autumn already. July and August are the best months for a visit to that area. Our people, too, go there in summer when the weather is cool there.

"Today, too, I've been to a cooperative farm around here. This year promises a big harvest of rice; an average of six tons per hectare, eight tons in some areas and ten tons at a maximum. In our country every crop field has its card of specifications. A survey of land was made across the whole country and soil conditions were examined. All this is recorded in the card. Whole bodies of students of the universities of agriculture and agronomists were mobilized for the work and it took them two years to complete it. According to the soil condition of each field magnesium, potassium and boron are mixed for application. More chemical factories have been built to produce them, but the actual amount of their application is not very big. Two agricultural university students have been assigned to each cooperative farm. They go not only to teach the farmers but also to learn from them so that both sides are improving their knowledge. At the hospital a doctor has the case histories of the inhabitants whom he or she takes care of so when a physician is replaced with a new one the newcomer will know the physical state of each person. Like this, anyone can apply the needed fertilizer that fits a field and decide what is sown to each plot. This began bearing fruit. If a rice stalk had 12 or 13 empty ears last year, only 2 or 3 were found this year.

"Every farm produces more grain than the previous year. The

increased production averages at 500 to 800 kilograms per hectare, one ton at a maximum. This morning, too, I've been to a farm. Hearing that they have harvested six tons per hectare, I asked about their next year's plan. They answered that they would increase the per-hectare yield by two tons. 'We have the scientific grounds to say so instead of relying on the vagaries of the elements,' they added. Today our farmers are richer, far better off than the middle peasants were before liberation. In the old days the middle peasants, who had no hired hands, found it difficult to keep enough provisions till May, the barley harvest time. But today our farmers have no worries about food until the next harvest of rice. We have to build storehouses for surplus grain. This is a good thing. Some time ago I met and talked with agricultural university students who were doing their practicals and let them speak their opinions. I told them the old tale which is so popular around here. These days young people are so absorbed in books of modern themes that they do not like to read books of the old days.

"Once upon a time it rained continually and the village was submerged under water. The landlord took a lump of gold out of his chest and climbed a tree, and a peasant went up a tree, taking corn-cakes with him. The two people were close to each other, within a striking distance. The water showed no sign of draining, and both began to feel hungry. The landlord begged the peasant to give him a corn-cake saying that he would pay gold for it. Thinking that bread is more precious than gold on such an occasion, the peasant shook his head and waited for the water level to drop low, eating his corn-cakes. The flood water did not abate for days and the hungry landlord fell down from the tree and was drowned. This tale tells us of how important grain is. If we have plenty of rice there is nothing to worry about. To be more precise, the present livelihood of our farmers is a little lower than that of the rich peasants of the past. So we'll not compare it with that of the middle peasants at that time. We will improve their life still more. But we cannot use the term 'up to the level of the landlord'. That means eating the bread of idleness. What's important here is to free them from arduous labour.

"In order to realize this, there must be tractors. At present two or three tractors work on every one hundred hectares in our country. Our aim is to increase them to eight on an average. If you ask an

agronomist or a student of the agricultural university they would reply that eight tractors are required for every 100 hectares. Then backbreaking manual work would disappear for good. We've manufactured rice-harvesters as well. Some time ago I inspected the testing of a harvester invented by a student. He confidently put his harvester to the test. It was right after a rainfall so its front wheel did not work well, though there was nothing wrong with the rear wheels. But it'll be of no use if it doesn't work well after rain. We've also imported some from Japan to test their efficiency. The machine worked smoothly and its harvesting speed was faster than by hand, but one has to push it by hand, so it exhausts the operator. We have tried the Italian-made harvester, too. But it cut the rice stalks in the middle so that proved of no avail, either. Imports are also coming from France. It is also pleasing to see a rich countryside. The farmers study during the winter season. Immediately after liberation our country had only two universities of agriculture–in Pyongyang and Wonsan. Of course, no agricultural university had existed in our country before liberation. At present, however, one is established in every province and they educate the students and assist in agriculture, taking full account of the specific conditions of their province. Let's wait two more years, then the number of agronomists will rise higher and further progress will be noticed in our agriculture. Our country appropriates an enormous fund for education. The largest part of our budget goes to education and the remainder is earmarked for other fields.

"When the Mansudae Art Troupe returned from its performance tour in Japan, I received a report of it over the phone from its leader. He said that they were accorded a tremendous welcome. I told him at the time that I didn't think the Mansudae Art Troupe was so refined in the artistic aspect and that the importance of its performance in Japan lay in the fact that they had learned how strong the friendship was between the Korean and Japanese people while associating with the Japanese people; this was more meaningful for them than their performance. I used to tell our people that we should distinguish the Japanese people from the Japanese imperialist rulers of the past. But there are people who still bear a grudge against them. However, if these people had seen with their own eyes, they could understand how earnestly the Japanese people long for friendship with our people. At departing all the perform-

ers had burst into tears. This was unforeseen, as they had been on performance tours to other parts of the world too, including China, France, and Italy. They were in tears because they were to visit Japan. I told them to wipe away their tears, saying that it was not a crying matter, but I could understand them. Meeting their compatriots in Japan made them feel quite different than when visiting other countries.

"After their return home I talked with the troupe leader over the phone but haven't seen him yet. The Mansudae Art Troupe planned to perform in China for a month but stayed there for two months. Without having a rest, they visited Japan where they performed fifty times during their sixty-day stay. So I told them to have a rest in the Kumgang Mountains. Listening to a report is not urgent. During the telephone talk the troupe leader said that he least expected that the Japanese people would receive them so warmly and that their tour had been of great significance for the development of friendship between the peoples of our two countries. It gives me a great pleasure to know that the young people of the Mansudae Art Troupe felt this so keenly.

"...At the recent summit conference of the over 80 member states of the Non-Aligned Movement unanimously approved the admission of our country into the movement. Disregarding abuse and slander, history takes its course. What outrages the south Korean authorities have perpetrated! They shanghaied Kim Tae Jung in broad daylight from Japan. Their acts are really shocking.

"What is most important in our country is the independent, peaceful reunification of the country. We cannot hand down a divided country to our posterity. The reunification of the fatherland is the most important task that has been assigned to us."

That is what President Kim Il Sung had told us; we have left out the conversation about our daily life.

I had brought the new edition of the President's works from Japan–*On Socialist Education* published by Miraisha. I intended to present the book to the President, the author. On my arrival I had immediately handed it over to the official concerned. I now asked whether he had received it. He answered; "Certainly I received it. But being pressed for time on the national day celebrations I had examined the dust jacket and the front cover only. I'm grateful to you". Suddenly our talk veered around to other subjects. From this, I could sense his humble personali-

ty, his modesty, that he didn't want to talk about himself. He only enquired about our health and daily life, our families and colleagues in Japan. We were greatly moved by this.

Meeting the President is actually a great event to people like us, independent visitors who had no particular mission to speak of. I recall an occurrence during my first visit to this country. Prior to my departure I had no opportunity to express my gratitude to him. So I wrote him a letter and requested the official concerned to deliver it to the President. Back home I received a lengthy telegram the President had sent. He said that he was happy to have received my letter, he hoped to develop the friendship between the Korean and Japanese peoples still further and he wished me success in my publishing work. This really surprised me. I had not expected anything of the kind. It was beyond my imagination that there could be a head of state who would not overlook such a negligible matter.

While looking over the Korean Revolution Museum, I was amazed to note that the President had given on-the-spot guidance to 1,700 places outside Pyongyang during 10 years. This means that he went on local tours every two days. At first I could not believe it. But this was possible, I thought, in the case of the President who gives priority to the "work with man" in Party work. Meanwhile the President pays attention to every nook of the people's livelihood.

Three hours had passed in a twinkle and when we walked out of the house amidst President Kim Il Sung's warm send-off, it was already dark and chilly outdoors and lamps were lighted in the yard. After bidding him farewell, I had walked some ten metres or so, but the President was still standing there, waving to us. I also waved back to him boldly, although I thought that my behaviour was somewhat impolite towards the President. Our car ran at high speed along the country road to Pyongyang. The sky looked like a sea of stars and I was seized with an overwhelming happiness as if I were nestling at the bottom of a deep sea.

The previous evening we had enjoyed the film "Under the Bright Sun". The film shows how the hero brings the lofty idea of the leader into full efflorescence and displays the honor of a revolutionary at the construction site of a hydroelectric power station. Under the warm care of the great leader he has traversed arduous revolutionary yet glorious

roads. The central personage is the general manager of the construction site. He had been an anti-Japanese guerrilla soldier before. The Japanese aggressor army soldiers burn down his house and kill his wife for having resisted their outrages. And his only little daughter is thrown into the flaming house but rescued by the nextdoor woman. Grown up, the daughter becomes a designer and devotes her youthful energy to the construction of the dam of the hydroelectric power station and thus grows to a revolutionary loyal to the Party and revolution.

At the end she learns that the general manager is her father. During the Fatherland Liberation War he had fought at the front as a soldier. In the night the water level rises due to a heavy downpour and the dam is in danger of bursting. The President's instruction that the bank is to be blasted and the course of stream be diverted to save the dam comes through a telephone. The Korean People's Army men have been ordered to stand by, but communications are all cut off. She gives a signal for blast with a torch on a hill as in the days of the Fatherland Liberation War. Thus the dam under construction is saved. Looking at the images of the people who fight shoulder to shoulder in order to protect the dam reinforced with sandbags from the flood water, I pictured in my mind's eye the 50-year-long arduous struggle of the Korean people for the revolution and construction. What surpassed our imagination has happened in reality in this country. The ties between President Kim Il Sung and the Korean people are far beyond my penetration.

Driving to Pyongyang, I prayed for the early advent of the day when the people of north and south Korea would unite under the bright sun.

The President's Words "A True, Faithful Friend" Moved Me

Yoneta Togo, Former Member of
the House of Representatives

Reception–October 1973

It is my great pleasure in April 1992 to see President Kim Il Sung greet his eightieth birthday in good health. I had visited Korea on 15 occasions from 1957 until I retired from the House of Representatives and two times after it. I will write about it later in detail, but as for the number of visits to Korea I think I am placed first among the Dietmen from the Socialist Party, among Japanese statesmen. Particularly my visits to Korea in the company of successive chairmen of the Socialist Party, including Sasaki Kozo, are unforgettable. Most of them have passed away now. But all of them had attained splendid results on their part, and the Korean side, too, accorded us warm hospitality for the reason that these were visits of leaders of the Socialist Party. A review of these will be given below.

My first visit was from April 24 to 30, 1957.

At the invitation of the Korean Communication Workers Trade Union, our All-Japan Communication Workers Trade Union delegation visiting Korea, while staying in Pyongyang, inspected different areas, for about a week. Only four years had passed after the Korean war but the country was seething with socialist construction. Pyongyang Railway Station was being built, and war wounds could be found in many parts of the city. I marvelled at the high enthusiasm of construction. We paid a courtesy call to the central office of the Korean Communication Workers Trade Union. At the time its vice-chairman raised the issue of the repatriation of the Koreans in Japan, saying:"Mr. Yoneta, you've come from Niigata, so I hope you will pay the attention this problem needs.

"At present the problem of the repatriation of the 600,000 Korean cit-

izens in Japan is also being raised in Korea as well as in Japan, and a vigorous movement is on for its realization. Perhaps it will come into effect in a year or two. This is the national right of the Korean people and is an humanitarian question. Hence, it must be solved without fail. In future the Niigata port should be open to a repatriation ship. I call for the deep sympathy and active cooperation of the Japanese people, particularly the citizens and workers of Niigata, in this matter. I hope that back home you will strive actively to settle this question." This is a summary of his talk.

I remember that I had excitedly promised to assist in the matter, grasping his hands tight. That was my first encounter with the "Korean issue". I had determined thereafter to fight further for the solution of the Korean problem.

Since then, as a member of the Japan Socialist Party and as a worker affiliated with the prefectural organization under Sohyo, I had always kept alive the question of repatriation of the Koreans in Japan; I worked hard as an official of the Niigata Prefectural Association to Render Assistance in the Repatriation of the Koreans in Japan. And in 1967 I was elected to the House of Representatives for the first time, and since I had been elected in Niigata, the repatriation port of the Koreans in Japan, I was assigned to work with Antaku, Secretary-General of the Special Committee of the Japan Socialist Party for Measures for the Korean Question. Since then I have worked on the Korean questions continually during the 18 years of my six running Diet terms when I worked as a Dietman from the Socialist Party. My second visit was realized between September 1 and 25, 1967.

I joined the People's Delegation of the Japan-Korea Association in the capacity of a member of the House of Representatives from the Socialist Party and the deputy head of the delegation. We were shown particularly the irrigation construction in the country. In Phanmunjom I witnessed the stark reality of the truce of hostilities between the north and south along the military demarcation line.

My third visit lasted from July 14 to 28, 1972.

I was then the Secretary-General of the Delegation of the Special Committee of the Japan Socialist Party for Measures for the Korean Question headed by Asika Oboe. That year diplomatic relations were established between Japan and China. It was believed that the estab-

lishment of diplomatic relations between Japan and Korea would be discussed soon. So, for promoting mutual understanding, we stayed for about two weeks at the invitation of the Korean Society for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries. Views were exchanged widely on the relations between Japan and Korea and a joint statement followed. And we went to various places, including Phanmunjom.

The fourth visit to Korea was conducted from October 4 to 17, 1973.

Our fortnight's visit was made at the invitation of the International Department of the Workers' Party of Korea. I was then the Secretary-General of the Delegation of Sasaki Kozo of the Japan Socialist Party. We talked with President Kim Il Sung and other officials and reached an agreement on the normalization of Japan-Korea relations. The issue of north-south reunification was first and foremost important though the establishment of diplomatic relations between Japan and Korea bore significance. Especially our Japan Socialist Party agreed to activate the friendship movement on the Japanese side. We had been to Phanmunjom and other places. The autumnal colour range of the Kumgang Mountains was really marvellous.

My fifth visit was made from April 30 to May 9, 1974. Under the title of the Yoneta Togo's Delegation of the Japan Socialist Party I was accompanied by Nakamura Shigeru, Member of the House of Representatives, and Ten Hideo, Member of the House of Councilors, for a sojourn of about ten days. We renewed our mutual understanding about Japan-Korea relationship following the issue of the "Joint Statement" for the reunification of north and south Korea on July 4, 1972. We saw many beautiful places, that were buried in fresh verdure.

The sixth visit was made from September 5 to 13, 1974.

As a member of Chairman Narita Tomomi's delegation of the Japan Socialist Party, I stayed in north Korea for about a week. In connection with the renewal of the US and China relationship in 1972 and the establishment of Japan-China diplomatic relations, we had talks with President Kim Il Sung on the promotion of Japan-Korea relations and exchanged opinions regarding the world and Korean situations. We reached complete agreement on all matters discussed at the time. We were invited to the celebrations marking the foundation of the DPRK.

The seventh visit was made between September 9 and 15, 1975. As the Secretary-General of the Delegation of the Japan Socialist Party,

led by the Vice-Chairman Akamatsu Isamu, I stayed in Korea for about a week. In connection with the case of the fishing boat *Shosei-maru,* a serious question arose in the mutual exchange in fishery. So we again discussed Japan-Korea relationship on the whole. We took part in the functions celebrating the founding of the DPRK on September 9.

My eighth visit to Korea was conducted from June 24 to July 4, 1976. As the head of the friendship delegation of Japanese fishermen I made a ten-day visit to Korea. After the incident of the fishing boat *Shosei-maru,* the fishermen in the coastal areas of Japan stepped up the Japan-Korea friendship movement and formed the Japan-Korea Fishermen's Friendship Association. Proceeding from this, the Japan Socialist Party dispatched a friendship delegation to Korea. We made a round of inspection to fishery centres, fishing ports and other facilities on the coastal areas of the East Sea of Korea and this helped to strengthen the friendship and mutual understanding of the fishermen of the two countries. Later this resulted in the conclusion of a non-governmental treaty of fishery between the two countries.

My ninth visit was made from August 26 to September 7, 1977. As a member of the Delegation of the Dietmen's League for Promotion of Japan-Korea Friendship, I visited Korea for about two weeks. In light of the north Korean announcement of its 200-mile territorial waters, it posed the urgent requirement to conclude a "non-governmental fishery agreement" for the safe operation of Japanese fishermen and to promote amity and friendship between the fishermen of the two countries. To this end our delegation was composed of representatives of fishery circles and friendship organizations, with the Dietmen's League for Promotion of Japan-Korea Friendship as its pivot. Thanks to President Kim Il Sung the agreement was concluded and the safety of Japanese fishermen was guaranteed.

The tenth visit was made from May 11 to 17, 1978 as a member of Chairman Asukata Ichio's delegation of the Japan Socialist Party (first). I stayed for about a week. Upon his assumption of office, Chairman Asukata Ichio attached importance to Asian questions, to the Korean issue in particular, and exchanged opinions regarding the general relationship between Japan and Korea and the solution of the problems arising in fishery.

The eleventh visit was made from April 28 to May 7, 1980. As a

member of the delegation of the Dietmen's League for the Promotion of Japan-Korea Friendship, I paid a ten-day visit to Korea. We exchanged views on the conclusion of the non-governmental fishery agreement and other problems, and agreed to promote friendly cooperation.

The twelfth visit was made from March 12 to 18, 1981.

As a member of Chairman Asukata Ichio's delegation of the Japan Socialist Party I stayed in Korea for about a week. We talked with the Workers' Party of Korea about the Asian and international situations and the creation of the nuclear-free peace zone in northeast Asia and signed a joint declaration.

The thirteenth visit was made from January 6 to 12, 1983.

Under the name of Secretary-General Yoneta's delegation of the Dietmen's League for the Promotion of Japan-Korea Friendship, we stayed for a week. The pressing question arose that had to be discussed concerning the extension of the period of the non-governmental fishery agreement between Japan and Korea. Our visit was synchronized with Prime Minister Nakasone's sudden visit to south Korea.

The fourteenth visit was recorded from June 26 to July 6, 1983. This was a one-week visit of Chairman Kuno's delegation of the Dietmen's League for the Promotion of Japan-Korea Friendship. Despite the efforts made by the Dietmen's League for the Promotion of Japan-Korea Friendship no revision could have been made to the non-governmental fishery agreement. The Nakasone government was little interested in the amendment of the agreement, so our hasty visit to Korea aimed to tide over the present obstacles. We had talks with the members of the Korean Society for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries and the Korea-Japan Friendship Society.

The fifteenth visit was made from September 5 to 14, 1983.

I was then Secretary-General of the Delegation of the Japan Socialist Party to the Celebrations Marking the 35th Anniversary of the DPRK headed by ex-Chairman Katsumata Seiichi which stayed in Korea for about ten days. This was a significant national day of the Korean people. The whole country was astir, in a festive mood. An august celebration meeting, a grand art performance, a mass gymnastics display and a grand soiree and the like took place.

After my retirement from the Diet I visited Korea twice: in 1989 I arrived to discuss the problem of a fishing boat owned by the people of

the Niigata Prefecture, and in October 1991 I visited Korea together with tourists to Pyongyang by a direct airliner.

As for the talks with the Korean Society for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries in the second visit to Korea, I will relate in the latter part of my notes. It took only two hours to Pyongyang by a direct airliner, which flew over Russian air space, instead of south Korea's. That is when I felt Korea was truly a near country to Japan. This is a brief report of my visits to Korea. I would like to refer to the President's personality which strongly impressed me.

I Was Deeply Moved by the Warm-Heartedness of the President Whenever I Visited Korea

When one meets the President one feels, above all, that he is a very great man, and feels a strong affinity with him. When one meets and talks with him, one feels as if one meets one's father. People like him have a personality and character that attract people, there is nothing domineering in their nature, they are thoughtful and tender-hearted.

When I visited Korea with Mr. Sasaki Kozo, he was on the wrong side of seventy. The President said, "Mr. Sasaki, though in good health, should take your age into consideration", and sent a doctor and a nurse to him every morning. When we left for home after performing our duties, he made them accompany us to Khabarovsk. Mr. Sasaki has participated in the movement for democracy since the Taisho Era and is now fighting capitalism, so I think that it was solicitude that the President showed to his comrade. But, to give such great consideration for others is quite troublesome.

Also, the time I visited Korea together with Mr. Narita, with the aim of adopting a declaration on the denuclearization of the northeastern regions of Asia, the President also welcomed us warmly. I think that Mr. Narita was in charge of the visiting party as the Chairman of the Socialist Party. He is a very honest politician so the President entertained cordially admiring his personality. Moreover, the President treated him as dearly as if he were his own comrade-in-arms.

There is one episode I would like to relate, connected with our visit of inspection to the rural areas. Starting on the tour of inspection, the

President rode together with Mr. Narita in the same car and seated him by his side. The President talked with him while riding along. I did not know what was said but the fact itself was impressive. Viewed in this light, the President is very solicitous and I feel great respect for him.

When I visited Korea with Mr. Asukata Ichio, the President gave a farewell party the day before we left for home. On such occasions, according to custom, the inviting and invited side deliver a complimentary address respectively. Following the address of our side, President Kim Il Sung made a speech, in which he said, in part:

"Our Party members and people feel pleasure and pride at the fact that they have a true friend faithful to his duty like the Japan Socialist Party in Japan, a neighbouring country." At this, I felt warm pleasure creep up. I cannot forget even now the feeling I experienced at that time. I was so moved at his words that I jotted them down.

I think that the President spoke thus because he knows that the Japan Socialist Party and Chairman Asukata are intimate with Korea, though he could have done so also because he is at the head of the state. In my opinion, his words were a clear expression of his personality. This is what distinguishes the President from the bureaucrats in Japan and the gentlemen in the Liberal Democratic Party, I think. These words were spoken by the President, the highest leader of Korea, who is in such a responsible position. I hence feel that he is our reliable friend.

Korean Socialism Based on the Juche Idea Is Secure

On examining the world situation of today we have: the Soviet Union was dissolved, the east of Germany was absorbed by its west and the country was unified, and many changes took place in the situations of other socialist countries. Some people thought that, in accordance with these changes, the north might be absorbed by the capitalist system of the south in Korea, but I never thought that.

Germany changed like that, but I do not regard Korea in the same class as Germany. When I visited the Democratic People's Republic of Korea in October 1991 I had a talk with an official of the Society for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries. He said confidently:

"In our country the greatest consideration is given to the Juche idea. It means a Juche character, independence, self-sustenance and self-defence. The main emphasis is put on the independence of the Korean people with a Juche character. So, we do not care what happened to the Soviet Union and Germany. We will only draw lessons from them, but cannot do anything of the sort. We did not imitate the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. One cannot administer the affairs of one's state by imitating the communist movement of other countries. If we imitate foreign things, we cannot conduct the affairs of our country, which are rooted in the history and life of the Korean people, which suffered national disasters, such as the Korean war, and the domination of south Korea by the US, and has advanced up to the present day. In the future, we will successfully carry out socialist construction and achieve national reunification."

Listening to him, I was sure our relations with Korea would develop.

The leader and the people in Korea both have self-confidence. I felt that the future of Korea will be bright and full of promise.

This is because Secretary Kim Jong Il is admirably succeeding to the revolutionary cause of President Kim Il Sung.

Today when we greet the 80th birthday of President Kim Il Sung, the question of the reunification of the south and the north, governmental negotiations with Japan and various other important questions are placed on the agenda in Korea. However, I think that under the President's guidance and solicitude these questions will be solved, though somewhat slowly, achieving the results expected by all the Korean people.

In other words, I believe that the reunification of the south and the north will be achieved, diplomatic relations with Japan will be normalized and Korea as an Asian country will exercise a great influence on international society in the future. In addition, I find that it is impressive and pleasant that such signs became manifest in these days when the 80th birthday of the President is approaching. I would like to conclude my writings with the earnest wish for their realization.

Felicitations to President Kim Il Sung, Great and Respected Revolutionary Leader, on His 80th Birthday

Ichikawa Makoto, Honorary Chairman of the International Solidarity Committee for Korea's Reunification and Peace

Reception Day–October 12, 1974

1. My First Visit to Korea, I Was Received by President Kim Il Sung, Great Leader of Revolution

By invitation of the All China Federation of Trade Unions I attended the May Day celebrations in Beijing in April 1958 as the head of the Japanese workers' delegation which represented Sohyo, the Federation of Independent Unions (FIU) and the National Federation of Industrial Organizations (FIO). There we met the delegation of the General Federation of Trade Unions of Korea (GFTUK) who kindly invited us to Korea. After contacting the central office of Sohyo, I went to Korea, together with about ten representatives of the above three organizations.

Thanks to the sympathetic offices of the All China Federation of Trade Unions our delegation left Beijing on October 8 on a visit to north Korea. We arrived at Pyongyang station via Sinuiju, receiving a grand, cordial welcome. Through the windows we could see bomb craters, vivid traces of the Korean war, here and there along the railroad. The Pyongyang station was abustle with postwar reconstruction. Our delegation paid a courtesy call to the central office of the GFTUK, and then went on to Mangyongdae. We had talks with the delegation of the GFTUK on two occasions. We were at several factories, Phanmunjom and Hungnam Fertilizer Plant. Thus we had fraternal contacts for about

ten days and then returned to China. To my regret, we had no opportunity to meet President Kim Il Sung at the time.

Back home, as the leader of the All Japan Garrison Forces Labour Union (Zenchuro) I struggled against the US army for an improvement in the treatment of the Japanese workers and defence of their rights. Luckily I was elected the Chairman of Sohyo in 1970. Unexpectedly I received the chance to go to Korea for the second time with Tateyama, who became Chairman of the Federation of Independent Unions in October 1974. At that time I and my delegation members had the honour to meet the esteemed leader President Kim Il Sung. I met the President six times and informed him of the labour movement in Japan, and as Vice-Chairman of the International Solidarity Committee for Korea's Reunification and Peace (CILRECO) briefed its activities to him. At these meetings and receptions the President told us much about the Korean situation. Sometimes I was invited to luncheon with him.

2. Rare Hospitality Accorded Us by the President

As I mentioned before, I met President Kim Il Sung for the first time in October, 1974 when I visited Korea at the invitation of the GFTUK at the head of the delegation of Sohyo and the Federation of Independent Unions. To be more precise, we were received by President Kim Il Sung, had a photo taken with him and were invited to the luncheon before and after midday of October 12th. That was my first visit to Korea after I was elected Sohyo Chairman at its convention held in August 1970, and it was the same with Chairman Tateyama of the FIU after his assumption of office. Like this our delegation was made up of representatives of the two main trade union organizations. We had talks with the GFTUK twice and a grand banquet was held in our honour. We were accorded cordial hospitality by the leading figures of the Workers' Party of Korea.

Especially when we visited Nampho city on October 11, a big mass rally of 70,000 people was held to welcome us and a colorful mass gymnastics display was performed by 50,000 schoolchildren in our honour. At the welcoming meeting attended by 70,000 people Kim Yong Nam from the Workers' Party (Vice-Premier and Foreign Minister at pre-

sent), took care of everything concerning us personally. We deemed it being a great favour.

At the mass meeting I, as the delegation leader, and Tateyama, the deputy leader, made a speech expressing our firm solidarity with and warm encouragement to them and fervently called for close friendship and solidarity between the workers and peoples of our two countries. Thunderous cheers burst out. Recalling the selfless struggle of the heroine of the revolutionary opera "A True Daughter of the Party" that I had seen 16 years before when I visited Korea for the first time, I raised high the notebook where I had taken down the story of the opera. Waving my right hand energetically, I made a speech about the great advance and progress the Republic had made. I was overwhelmed with emotion, in other words, it was very good that I had visited Korea.

The mass meeting was followed by a get-together when an official of the Nampho City Party Committee told us the moving story about the mass rally of 70,000 people. According to his explanation, when the directives had come from the Party Central Committee to the local Party committee, the latter said it was difficult to get such a huge crowd of people together as October was a busy harvest month in the countryside. There was another phone call at the dead of night to convey the words from the Party centre, "The delegation of Sohyo and FIU is honored guest to our Republic. Every effort should be made to arrange the mass meeting successfully, putting other things aside" After this, the responsible worker of the local Party committee, mindful of the importance of the occasion, called upon all Party members and succeeded in holding a rally of 70,000 people after rushing east and west for three days and nights in a row. His explanations made me again feel how fervently and how deeply President Kim Il Sung was concerned about the Japanese working class. His paternal love moved me to tears. At the same time I thought that the Japanese workers, too, ought to strengthen their militant solidarity and friendship with the Korean workers.

3. I Ask Him to Favour Me with His Autograph

On October 12 we were invited to the luncheon following our talk. I sat to the right of the President. He graciously filled my glass taking up

the *insam* wine bottle in his right hand every time I emptied my glass. "This is pheasant meat." So saying, he would heap it on my plate time and again. I ate with a good appetite. I drank five or six glassfuls of *insam* wine. I had a favour to ask of the President, which I had nurtured for a long time. Inspired by his benevolent smile, I became bold enough to broach my request;

"Excuse me, Sir, but would you please give us an autographed message for the Japanese workers?"

After laughing heartily, he said, "Only on one condition!" As I wasn't able to catch his meaning, I felt a bit embarrassed. He then continued: "I hope this will be your first and last request." Quite relieved, I hastily replied, "I can assure you it is, Sir." I had fulfilled my momentous task, and even the *insam* wine now seemed sweeter.

The following day, the gift was delivered to us.

I went to meet Kim Yong Nam. I was surprised to see the large framed autographed message he was holding. My eyes were riveted to it....

Kim Yong Nam said, "Mr. Ichikawa, you need not worry about it. When you return home, the President's large special plane will fly it to Beijing". I calmed down a bit and stepped forward to receive the large framed autograph of the President.

It bore the message still fresh in India ink;

"The workers the world over, unite and struggle to build a new society independent of imperialism and free from all manner of oppression and exploitation! For the happiness of all people!"

Kim Il Sung
October 1974

What significant gift! Indeed this is an instruction expressing the great revolutionary leader's high expectation upon and inspiration to the people and working class.

"Bravo!" I silently exclaimed.

Now it hangs on the wall in the lounge of the Sohyo centre. It is my responsibility to protect it. I will firmly defend the great sun.

4. On the General Conversation I Had with the President

When receiving our delegation the President used to meet us with a smile in front of the reception room. After having a souvenir photo taken, he would lead us into a spacious room, where every member of the delegation was introduced to him. He would bid us welcome and then related about the general developments of the internal and external situations.

He would personally conduct us into another room; on display there were the gifts the delegation offered and he listened to explanations about them. Then he would drink a toast in honour of all the delegation members. If we were not invited to the dinner, the delegation members would bid him farewell and leave.

At the time of the banquet we were led into an adjoining room with a large table and dined with the President and other leading officials of the Republic.

As for me, I sat on the right side of the President when I was the head of a delegation. And when I was a member of the delegation of an international organization, I would sit next to the delegation leader, as a delegate of Japan.

5. My Impressions and Reminiscences of the Great Revolutionary Leader President Kim Il Sung

For this I think I would need to cover a wide range of stories about his leaving his native home as a teenager, the guerrilla struggle, the training and general organization of guerrilla units in Mt. Paektu, his scheme on the foundation of the Juche idea, etc. But this is quite beyond my powers since I am little prepared for it. So that, please excuse my writing about what I witnessed personally, having no definite plot.

It had become evident with the foundation of the Juche idea that President Kim Il Sung excels others personally in character, quality, meditation, leadership and ability to command. I can by no means touch

on all these matters, so I will confine myself chiefly to a few of my personal experiences.

What I want to say, first of all, is about his broad magnanimity. Because the popular masses respect and adore him. He embraces the people with great magnanimity, there is no end to it. The President loves the people like his own family and has firm faith in them. In Korea I was told that he said that the "children are the kings of the country". Such an expression does not spring up by itself. I seemed to get to the bottom of it after repeated rumination of his words. I was moved and very grateful to him for his trust in and warm love for the working class of Japan. It is only natural that he loves and trusts the people and workers of the Republic, but he is also concerned about the Japanese workers, here none can match his greatness.

In order to meet our delegation the President awaited our arrival in front of the reception hall. Going with us to pose for a souvenir photograph, he was smiling broadly. This is a rare thing with a head of state, and we felt very indebted to him.

Life in the Paektu Mountains was an ordeal by itself. Although he hated the Japanese imperialists, he had a sincere trust in the Japanese workers and received them cordially.

He cherished a hatred for Japanese imperialism and was loyal to the revolution and devoted all his energy on national reunification and independence and thus reached the highest peak that was inaccessible to others.

Especially, in order to achieve national reunification and peace, he thinks it necessary to enlarge and develop the movement of solidarity with international organizations. This idea originates from his great political creed. This has left an indelible impression upon me.

Following his triumphant return to the homeland, the President was enraged at the American imperialists for having bisected the country into the north and south along the 38th parallel and for occupying south Korea, trampling freedom under their jackboots, and he fought heroically against them. Such a leader is worthy of praise.

Around 1969 he dispatched a representative of the Workers' Party of Korea to Europe to expose the atrocities committed by the US imperialists in the Korean peninsula and to promote friendship and exchange with many representatives from various countries and to activate the

solidarity movement on an international scale. This was a brilliant idea which added much towards developing the worldwide CILRECO movement. It was an outstanding guiding idea, indeed.

6. Conclusion

My last visit to Korea was made in September 1986 as a member of the delegation of an international organization coincident with the visit of the Japan Socialist Party delegation led by Shimotai. I was invited to the august banquet held at the Kumsusan Assembly Hall, where I had the honour, among others, to sit at the table in the centre of the hall. On behalf of all the participants of the party I, facing the President, gave three cheers, raising my glass high, and wished him a long life and good health. This was the greatest honour to me which became engraved in my mind. I thanked him from the bottom of my heart.

The Great Leader Who Moves the World

Ogami Kenichi, Secretary-General
of the International Institute
of the Juche Idea

Reception Day–April 16, 1975

Every time I greet the birthday of the President, I recall afresh the day when he received me, and my emotions overwhelm me again. At the same time I cannot repress the happiness that I was personally acquainted with the President and my feeling of gratitude towards him who has led me along the right path of the Juche idea. At such times I recall the glorious days of my interview with the President.

In April 1975, when I visited Korea for the second time, I had the honour of being received by the President. That was my second visit and in addition I was animated by the desire to meet the President. But on the other hand, it seemed to me that it was wishful thinking to meet such a great man, who is so busy with state affairs.

In fact, I did not deserve having an audience with the President, considering that I was not distinguished either in my social standing or in my accomplishments. Until I stood in front of him, I was unable to believe that I was there.

The historical day had come quite unexpectedly. On April 16, prior to his visit to China, President Kim Il Sung, though busy, found the time to meet a Japanese scholar and me.

Barely repressing our excitement, we drove to his office building. The lift carrying us stopped and the door opened. The President whom I had been longing to see, was standing there, smiling broadly. I couldn't believe my eyes.

Oh, how I had been yearning for this moment. At last I met the President who had instilled me with such bright hopes and opened the glorious path of Juche before me when I was straying in the darkness, forsaken by hope or prospect.

Like a father, the President received me cordially, gripping my hand firmly, and posed with me for a souvenir photograph. I don't know how to express my sentiments on meeting the President whom I had esteemed as the greatest revolutionary leader in the world. Tears filled my eyes. The President was standing before me, holding my hands in his. I felt as if I was in a dream. Instantly the day of April 14 flashed up in my mind when we pledged to follow the Juche idea only and to dedicate our all to the realization of the cause of Juche.

The seven representatives of the Japanese Young Men's Society for the Study of the Juche Idea, now on a visit to the Republic, vowed, on the eve of the President's 63rd birthday, to advance straight along the road of Juche and devote all their energy for the victory of the Juche cause.

Still wrapped in the emotion of the moment, I was being received as one of the Japanese students of the Juche idea. This was the greatest glory and happiness for me.

The President led us into a reception room. I sat beside him. He inquired about our health and said he was sorry for having kept us waiting until then.

The President then said:

"This is my first meeting with you, but I feel as if I've met old friends. That is because we have become friends and proceed from the unity of ideology and purpose. Today I am very pleased to meet you in a comradely atmosphere."

He stated encouragingly that we were exerting our efforts in Japan to spreading a profound knowledge of Korea, that this would add much to strengthening the friendship between Korea and Japan.

Noting that the Japanese and Korean peoples have the same fate, he remarked:

"I think the Korean and Japanese peoples pursue the same ideal in view of their struggle against imperialism and a common desire for peace in Asia and for socialism. From this point of view, I should say, their unity is very important."

That day the President told us that the present age is an era of independence and that victory is on the side of the revolutionary people who fight for the realization of independence. It is the greatest honour for one to study the Juche idea and to live and fight for its sake in this era,

he stressed. He then continued:

"Emphasis at present is laid on independence throughout the world.

"The new-born independent states, not to mention the socialist states, struggle for independence.

"Many capitalist countries are raising their voices, demanding independence.

"Today independence has become an ideological trend.

"I have met the heads of state, people, pressmen and scholars from African states, as one they stressed independence.

"You and we are living in such an age when we must strive as comrades-in-arms and as comrades, to awaken all the people to fall in line with the trend of the present times. By doing so, I think, we can make a contribution to the whole of mankind."

We were carried away by our emotions when he indulged us with such encouraging words, regarding us as comrades-in-arms in the struggle for independence, though we were young in every respect.

We told him that we were still small in number and inexperienced in our activity for the study and dissemination of the Juche idea. At this, he emphasized: "Whether you are strong or weak in force matters little. As the saying goes, a prairie fire starts from a spark, it will develop into a big flame in future, though it is weak now. Speaking of ourselves, we are also only beginners. This is the beginning but it will flourish in a big way."

He met us, amidst his busy hours, though we have done nothing to speak of, and explained problems of theoretical and practical importance, to lend us strength in our activity.

He told us to help ourselves to cakes and to smoke cigarettes just as he would to his old friends. Indeed, listening to the President, a man of noble personality, was like listening to a flow of impressive seconds charged with great emotion.

I got little strained. I was drawn to him like to my own father. I was completely unconscious of the passage of time. He also toasted us on that day.

Tears blurred my eyes because of the abundance of the honour and emotions I had received. I was unable to sleep that night. The excitement that I had met the President which had been my long-cherished desire; my admiration for his generous and tenderhearted personality;

the high honour and ecstasy of a man who learns from such a great man and lives and works under his care; all this dispersed sleep.

Born into a poor family I had worked my way through the evening course of high school and became a university student. Life had awakened me to the need to transform the Japanese society, so full of contradictions and the pressing requirement to struggle to this end, so I plunged into the students' movement. But the struggle was not successful and my comrades in that struggle had all gone in search of more "secure" jobs. Crestfallen, I deplored my incompetency, gritting my teeth in rage.

With the sole desire to recast society, I tackled various activities, but I was unable to find any good solution.

At such a moment I happened to read the book *Kim Il Sung: Biography*. When I had read it through, I felt as if a distant horizon had drawn up closer to me.

I became convinced that having such a wonderful leader as President Kim Il Sung in the world is the greatest happiness for the world's progressive people aspiring for renovation, and also for us, young people.

And I was sure that if the youth movement in Japan follows him and adopts his idea as its compass, a movement struggling in the marsh of dogmatism, losing its independence, it would be able to take the right path of development.

Truly, President Kim Il Sung is the most outstanding revolutionary leader in the world.

Mankind's modern history has witnessed such great leaders as Marx, Engels and Lenin and their achievements are enormous. It was 50 to 100 years ago that they carried out their activity. They advanced the guiding ideas for their eras but departed before realizing them completely. They were not versatile either in theoretical or practical aspects, but distinguished themselves in some particular fields.

However, President Kim Il Sung is a most distinguished leader who is beyond comparison with them for the profound contents and affluence of his theories and for his noble personal character.

Back home, I set to popularizing the greatness of the President among the broad Japanese masses of people.

We made it our goal to form the "Izu Youth Centre for the Study of

the Juche Idea" by April 15, 1976, in honour of the 64th birthday of the President and carried it out successfully in a short period–less than six months.

For the meaningful celebration of April 15, 1977 we founded a theoretical magazine *Study of Kimilsungism* and published the book *On the Youth*, a collection of the President's classical works on the problem of the youth.

In this course numerous young people left for various parts of Japan in order to organize study groups of the Juche idea more extensively.

From September 14 to 17, 1977, the International Seminar on the Juche Idea was held in Pyongyang. I had the honour to make a speech at the seminar under the title, "Great Kimilsungism has now become a most powerful guiding idea even for the revolutionary struggle in advanced capitalist, imperialist countries".

Pointing to the question "What is our age", I spoke in the following veins:

"Ours is the age moving along the path indicated by Kimilsungism.

"A revolutionary struggle cannot emerge victorious unless it is guided by a correct revolutionary idea and guideline. All problems raised by the times and the path of our age can be solved and illuminated only by a correct revolutionary idea. This teaches us that what is important in defining an era is the guiding idea, the revolutionary idea, that is, the decisive factor for the development of the times. In this sense, if we call the age one hundred or fifty years ago the era of Marxism-Leninism, we can declare ours as the age of Kimilsungism.

"And ours is an era that is led by the great President, the founder of Kimilsungism.

"Marx and Lenin played their part within a limited periphery in their lifetime, and Marxism and Leninism developed into a worldwide trend after Marx and Lenin had passed away.

"In contrast, Kimilsungism has become the basic trend sweeping the world and is attracting the world's people in the present age when the President, its founder, is still engaging in energetic activity. This is eloquent proof of the greatness of Kimilsungism.

"Therefore, our age is called the age of Kimilsungism, the age led by President Kim Il Sung, an epoch when the world's people in firm unity around him are carrying on the revolution and construction."

Concluding my speech I stressed the necessity of founding an international body for the study of the Juche idea.

The Pyongyang international seminar decided to set up an international organization for the study of the Juche idea in accordance with the proposals made by representatives from many countries of the world.

During my stay in Pyongyang I had an audience with President Kim Il Sung two times. Though pressed for time he met us and had a souvenir photo taken with us and indulged us with precious gifts.

In the evening of September 24 an official of the Korean Society for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries came to our hotel to convey the delightful news that the President would be receiving us on the following day, the delegation of Japanese scholars for the study of the Juche idea.

I was too excited to get to sleep that night.

The next morning I headed for the reception place, attired in my best. Through the window of the car I saw many beautiful flowers; they looked as if they were greeting me on my way to meet the President.

At this happy moment I recalled the unforgettable meeting with the President in the Kumsusan Assemby Hall a few days before. The representatives, who had come to attend the international seminar on the Juche idea from various countries had been invited there.

The President appeared in the assembly hall on that day where the representatives were lined up in a row.

Out of joy and excitement, many representatives chanted "Juche" and "Kim Il Sung", waving to him; some even shouted at the top of their voice, "Long live President Kim Il Sung!"

Amidst stormy applause the President shook hands with every person. He then attended the banquet arranged by the government of the Republic, and he posed for a souvenir photograph with the representatives.

Touched by his great personality, I said to myself that President Kim Il Sung is truly a rare leader in the world. ...

The car arrived at the place of reception before I was aware of it. It was very gracious for him to come as far as the entrance to meet us.

At first I reported to him about the activities of the Japanese youth and students studying the Juche idea, and then conveyed the deep

gratitude evinced by the young devotees of the Juche idea in Japan.

After listening to my report with an affectionate glance, he said, "Thank you!"

Citing concrete facts, he explained that learning and disseminating the Juche idea had become the ardent desire of the world's people. He gave a correct and intelligent analysis of the prospects for the study of the Juche idea, of Korea-Japan relationship and of the general developments of the internal and external situation.

The President referred to the activities of the Japanese youth, too. When I learned that he was even giving attention to the youth in Japan, I was seized with emotion.

That day, saying, "I have decided to dedicate my morning hours to you," he gave us valuable instructions for many hours in a row.

At the luncheon table, he gave us important guidance.

Sitting opposite him at the table, I was busy writing his words down, without eating. Noticing this, he helped me to food and filled my glass with wine for a toast. His benevolent, kindhearted look reminded me of my own father.

That day he spent more than four hours with us. When I returned to the hotel, all shadows of the worries which had been weighing heavily on my mind, had vanished like the morning dew and I saw the vast stretch of a field in my mind's eye.

Upon my return to Japan, I addressed the representatives from the youth groups for the study of the Juche idea, telling them about the audience granted by the President. Listening to my report, they were immensely moved by his affection and solicitude and voiced their determination to advance straight along the road indicated by his Juche idea and exert themselves jointly for the early materialization of the Juche idea in Japanese society.

Indeed, President Kim Il Sung is not only the great father of the Korean people but also the teacher of the world's people and a benevolent father to the Japanese people.

Therefore, many young people in different parts of Japan sincerely revere the President and join the ranks of students of the Juche idea with the resolve to follow the road he has opened.

After work the young workers gather in the office they had built and study the history of the President's revolutionary activities and the

Juche idea, forgetting their fatigue.

Like warm sunshine, the hand of the President reaches factories, fishing villages, towns and villages and schools in all parts of Japan; the Japanese people are gaining fresh strength and courage under its sunrays.

The Japanese people, who want to learn the Juche idea and follow its road, are increasing in number and the activities for the study and dissemination of the Juche idea are gaining greater momentum.

The All-Japan Liaison Council of the Society for the Study of President Kim Il Sung's Works sponsored the 10th National Conference for the Scientific Seminar on the Juche Idea between November 19 and 20.

The meeting unanimously approved the decision of its organizing committee on instituting the International Institute of the Juche idea in Tokyo.

On April 9, 1978, finally the foundation of the International Institute of the Juche Idea was made public all over the world.

This was a great honour and a matter of pride for all the people who live in the age of President Kim Il Sung. With the appearance of the permanent international organization for the study and dissemination of the Juche idea, the people the world over were able to advance vigorously along the road indicated by the Juche idea under the guidance of President Kim Il Sung.

Today the world's people worship President Kim Il Sung and study and propagate the Juche idea.

The Juche idea is now widespread, and its flag is fluttering high, everywhere in the world.

The world's people pay homage to President Kim Il Sung, the founder of the Juche idea.

On behalf of the unanimous desire of the world's people, I convey our sincere regards and gratitude to President Kim Il Sung, the author of the Juche idea and the great leader of the age of independence.

In conclusion, I sincerely wish respected President Kim Il Sung a long life and good health for the reunification of Korea and for the realization of an independent world.

Friendship Knows No Boundary

Hayashi Ryoso, President of
Taisho University and Director
of the Japan-Korea Society
for Cultural Exchange

Reception—May 1975

1

In May 1975, Takagi Takeo, the then Director of the Society for Japan-Korea Cultural Exchange and I paid a three-week visit to Korea.

Takagi was engaged in a news coverage in the Republic from the winter of 1971 to the spring of 1972. A Japanese journalist, who was the first to stay so long in the Republic after its foundation, Takagi published his reportage in the newspaper *Yomiuri Shimbun*, which caused tremendous repercussions. He also wrote the book *Kim Il Sung, Master of Leadership*. This masterpiece, worthy of a Kim Il Sung's biography, contains stories and materials the author had obtained while meeting President Kim Il Sung a number of times and what he had heard from Vice-President Rim Chun Chu and other veteran fighters of the anti-Japanese guerrilla war, spending several days with them and what he had gathered during his news coverage in the countryside and at factories.

Takagi was not only a veteran journalist but also the author of the book, *History of Survived Japan*, the first best-seller on Japan's history after her defeat in the war. He has sharp eyes for discovering the truth. Such as he was, Takagi was completely attracted to the President. He had keenly felt the necessity to impart the Japanese people correct knowledge about Korea, which had been unknown to them until then. He thought he should let them know that the division of Korea into the north and the south resulted from Japan's colonial rule over it, and that they should endeavour to help the Korean people to become reunited at an early date.

With such a desire he formed the Society for Japan-Korea Cultural Exchange with a large attendance of his friends.

Takagi was very interested in the period of the anti-Japanese guerrilla war waged by the President. The spirit of nation building and ways for the successive establishment of the Republic were all borne by the arduous experience in the days of guerrilla warfare. Accordingly, he thought, a correct knowledge of the guerrilla war period would serve as grounds for an understanding of the political thinking or the actual social condition of contemporary Korea. So he revisited Korea in 1975.

Takagi was born in 1904, aged 70 now. It was the natural opinion of his entourage that someone should accompany him because of his health. The role of his assistant fell on me as I had been assisting him ever since the publication of the *History of Survived Japan*. But I was little informed of nor interested in Korean affairs.

2

After my return from Korea, a friend of mine told me with a serious look, "I'm glad to see you back. You're lucky to come back home safe." Many Japanese people thought in this manner at the time.

Here is a funny tale that I had heard in Korea. Once some south Korean fishermen were rescued by the north Korean side when blown out to sea by a storm. "Where are we?" they asked. "Here, in north Korea," was the answer. But they didn't believe it because they had been told that "the north Koreans have horns on their heads". That is how far apart the south and north were from each other, and the antagonism between them was grave.

The Japanese didn't think the north Koreans have horns on their heads, but north Korea was known as a "horrible country" to a considerably broad public, including the Japanese people. I was also under such a belief. When Takagi was offered the job of "Director of the Society for Japan-Korea Cultural Exchange", he was advised to "decline the offer since it might be a handicap to his activity. ..."

Such a manner of thinking changed completely during the three weeks of my stay in Korea. It would be wrong to say that the warm hospitality had changed my view of north Korea. It was rather more than

that because I had come to sympathize with the way they live and I had communicated with them heart to heart. This can be said to be a tie of profound human sympathy, I should say. The sincere heart of a man is evergreen in one's memory.

Japan and Korea have completely different social systems. Naturally, however, the peoples of the two countries think alike in many respects. Although principal differences there exist in that priority is given to the life of an individual or to the interests of the state and society, it is not private life alone that exists in a social system nor that individual life is buried under the weight of the whole.

Messrs. Ri and Kim who guided us in Korea frequently told me that "our country respects the life of the individual" In other words, this means to strive for an improvement of people's living standards. When they were under the colonial rule of Japan the life of the Koreans was very miserable. Mr. Ri, who was of my age, said that he managed to enter a secondary school with difficulty only to be dispelled from it at the second year, being unable to pay the school fees.

"Now our children are treated as the masters of the country," said Ri. Starting from pre-school education and primary school, they study free of charge up to university. They are provided with everything needed for studies and also uniforms gratis. The 11-year compulsory education was enforced throughout the country from 1975. Knowledge is the motive force for social progress; it is deepened through labour while the latter is improved by knowledge.

"We have built our country splendidly from scratch by uniting as one around our great leader," said Ri confidently, strolling along the Pothong River.

3

It was not long after the President had returned from his visit to China. His daily schedule must have been drawn up more closely than ever before but still he spared the time to invite Takagi to dinner. I accompanied him.

Ten o'clock on a Saturday morning early in May! The sky was azure, without a speck of cloud. A carpet of lawn stretched from the gate of the

villa in the outskirts of Pyongyang. Rice transplanting was in full swing. We saw a cosy two-storey building standing not far from us. The President was out at the entrance to welcome us. The tall President led short Takagi inside, supporting him with his arms. And a lively conversation started at once. Our topics were Takagi's previous visit to Korea and his recently published book. Takagi raised questions concerning the international situation and future policies.

His answers are given in the "Kim Il Sung, *Selected Works*".

"Mr. Takagi likes beer, then let's have lunch and drink beer, and then we'll continue our talks," suggested the President. Two hours flew by before I even noticed it. "You must be tired". "Sometimes I feel exhausted. Then I visit the countryside and have a talk with some farmers, sitting knee to knee with them. Or I call at the children's palace to see their healthy faces." I overheard their conversation.

In his works the President emphasized that a cadre ought to go to the front line, with a knapsack on his back. Everyone should help to make a person stronger who has weak legs. The idea here is that a social reform is impossible unless we are united with the masses and pool their wisdom. Listening to him, his advice went straight to my heart. And, as the President pointed out, it is very important to struggle against bureaucracy, flunkeyism and dogmatism since they will arrest the progress of revolution.

The badge with President Kim Il Sung's portrait on it was also talked about on this occasion. The President smiled, saying that it would do no good if we would prohibit the people's spontaneous wish to wear the badge on their breast. In his words "It's no good if we would prohibit..." we can presume different cases. Sometimes it might cause unendurable pain. But his love towards the people heals all this agony. To him the people are his comrades and his family. The conversation touched on the payment of foreign debts. His answer was very optimistic.

"We plan to hold a mass meeting of Pyongyang citizens to welcome you," said the President. Takagi dissuaded him earnestly and the President agreed, with the remark, "a great pity!"

That evening Takagi wondered why he accorded us such warm hospitality. "I'm only a journalist, and an uninfluential country man. What does his cordiality mean?" Of course, it was not my business to reply to

that. Listening to them talking, I could see that they fully appreciated each other's viewpoint, and sincere feelings flowed between them. Although the words "friendship" or "friend" could not be given them, I still felt that strong friendly feelings affected them, overcoming their differing positions.

"Isn't it his friendship, I wonder.... Grateful to the President," Takagi repeated. After the dinner we enjoyed a newly released film entitled "High-Tension Cable". We left the villa in the evening, stimulated by the refreshing May breeze.

4

The next day our young interpreter Mr. Kim asked me, "Yesterday was a very wonderful day, wasn't it?" I told him of what I had felt yesterday. Our interpreter was a graduate of the Japanese faculty of the University of Foreign Studies. He frankly told me that at times he had doubts about whether he had been right in choosing to become a Japanese interpreter. He had no grounds to complain about his present job. But he said he had so little opportunities of meeting the President. Had he worked at a factory or a farm he might have met him or, luckily, even have had a chat with the President when he gave on-the-spot guidance. But his present job does not promise such a chance. That was his sore spot.

Afterwards I visited Korea several times. It seemed to me that in this way my knowledge of Korea was gradually deepening. Before I began to visit Korea I had even felt it queer to pronounce the word "Korean". I couldn't spit out the "Korean" freely as I did the Americans, the British or the Chinese. I think this comes from the complex feelings our contemporary Japanese people had before.

While staying in Korea I had frequently heard them saying "our country". They speak of it with a high sense of pride. Undoubtedly, this is an expression of nationalism. But what is more important is that the entire people, united around the distinguished leader, had turned out better today than yesterday and would open a far more wonderful future than today. This vigorous and amazing accomplishment made the Koreans boast of "our country".

Anyone who knows Korea's reality can pronounce the word "Korean" with respect. The Japanese people once made Korea colorless on the world map. They even attempted to assimilate the Korean people into the Japanese. One must reflect on the past of Japan. And, basing himself on this, he then should make a profound study of Korea.

Concluding my report on the visit to Korea in 1975, I wrote:

"The Koreans had built a country through their own efforts which they can boast of as 'our country'. This is the fruition of the people's efforts, united around their leader who is faithful to his credo, 'I always live among the people', and loyal to the strict moral discipline of unconditional obedience to him, a people who have done much for the present achievements and are striving, longing to meet a still brighter future."

I have expressed my views on the DPRK proceeding from the facts that I had an audience with the President and received his advice when accompanying Takagi Takeo, Director of the Society for Japan-Korea Cultural Exchange in May 1975. And also through my repeated visits I made friends with many people. Thinking of a country is not an abstract concept. Friendship knows no borders. I think it is essential to look at a country with friendly feelings.

Full of Confidence and Pride

Hidari Sachiko, Actress

Reception – May 1975

Hidari Sachiko, a film actress, visited the DPRK from late April to May as a member of the delegation of the People's Council for the Promotion of the Establishment of Japan-Korea Diplomatic Relations and was received by President Kim Il Sung. Speaking of her first visit, Hidari Sachiko remarked, "It is a beautiful memory which I shall never forget".

The Flowering Season of Willows and Broad-leaved Lilacs

What impressions did you get while travelling from Pyongyang to Phanmunjom?

Hidari: It was about a 30-minute's drive to Pyongyang from the airport. Rice transplanting was in flowing tide and the vast stretch of paddies were green with fresh rice seedlings.

Beautiful peach and apple blossoms were in full bloom on a neatly terraced hill. The soil was covered with fresh vegetation and the flowers were at their best.

I was really fascinated by such beautiful urban scenes during my ten-day stay in Korea.

In Pyongyang the fuzzy willow seeds were wafting around, swaying weeping willows. It was just as if it were snowing in summer. The broad-leaved lilacs were so marvellous, too.

Tokyo and Pyongyang are alike in that they had started from razed fields, but the latter has been rebuilt with the main concern placed on the people who are king and master.

The floors of every house are heated by a central heating system for a city with a one-million population.

This was really surprising. And everything is like this.

I don't deny Paris is a wonderful city aesthetically. It was built by Napoleon. But, if we were to mention a genuine city of modern times that embodies both beauty and wisdom, wouldn't it be Pyongyang?

Women walking along the beautiful avenues were lovely to look at. Their hair-dos were smart and their faces were lightly made up. It is not only the people's attire, Pyongyang itself is an art, I should say.

I Marveled at the Clean Film Studio

What did you see at the film studio?

Hidari: I least expected that I would be calling at a film studio. However, you perhaps know little about this subject. It is common knowledge that a film studio is a filthy place all over the world. In addition, it is usually located in some very inconvenient spot. I knew all this so I refused to go to the film studio. But I did go and was surprised when I arrived there. Its compound was very large and had everything–a school, a nursery school, and the like. All excellent facilities were provided and were at the disposal of the working women.

This was to the great envy of people like me who had travelled in Africa and the Andes for six months, leaving my kid behind. What worried me most during my foreign tour was how my kid under some other person's care got on.

Would you like to give your impressions of the May Day demonstrations?

Hidari: I was told that there would be a dancing party in the evening. It took place in Kim Il Sung Square with 10,000 young men and women present. While dancing, I was very happy to see smiling young women in colourful silk Korean costumes. They looked so pretty, though they had become so tanned while working. We danced, moving from one dancing circle to another, yet they let us join in as their friends.

When grasping their hands hardened by labour–I cannot say exactly whether their palms were hard or thick–I was overwhelmed with an excitement that gripped my heart warmly.

Is there anything special you would like to mention about the citizens?

Hidari: In my opinion, the Japanese people look too occupied. First, I presume, it's because education crushes the sentiments and creative spirit of the human being. This thought pierced me deeply when I inspected the Students and Children's Palace here.

Some time ago I had a 10-minute TV chat on what I had seen in Korea. After that I received telephone calls from many people, asking, "Miss Hidari, you spoke during the newscast about a fantastic country where schooling and medical treatment are free, the house rent is almost naught, the commodity prices are low and no tax is paid. Where on earth does such a country exist?" I do hope that the Japanese people will get a better knowledge of Korea's reality exactly as it is.

No Money Is Spared for Children's Education

Miss Hidari, I've heard that you were a teacher once.

What do you feel after having learned about education and children in the Republic?

Hidari: At the Students and Children's Palace I marvelled at the fact that every pupil was studying something–music, literature, science, the arts, etc–anything he or she liked. That the spirit of independence is deep-rooted in the minds of the children also drew my attention... Let me tell you what I saw myself. I saw a procession of some twenty children passing by me in the street. There was no teacher with them. When I spoke to them, they said that they were 4th- and 5th-year primary school pupils and were now coming back from the place they had inspected for their study without their teacher accompanying them. This was a real surprise.

The children seemed to have no worries. They were so delighted to meet us wherever we went. They also gave song and dance performances for us. I once taught gymnastics at a high school. Maybe, this is why I was so keenly impressed by the fact that even 2nd- and 3rd-year primary schoolchildren were training in gymnastics.

I marvelled at their sturdiness and the well-knit training of so young children. Their basic constitution is formed from 8 to 13 years of age.

How do things stand in Japan today? The Japanese children of about this age are pressed to prepare themselves for examinations, under the guidance of private teachers disregarding whether they like it or not. So that–improving their constitution is out of the question.

I was very interested in such facts as the existence of facilities like the Students and Children's Palace, where the children could cultivate their talents to the full, that they choose the one they want to learn and that they go to the palace every day without their parents.

Little as they are, they do everything splendidly.

The state does not grudge money for the education of the children.

Would you like to say anything about the women of the DPRK?

Hidari: The first thing one notes is that most women go to work. They are provided with the necessary conditions for this. They don't have to worry about the education of their children.

The women in Japan, though talented, are given no jobs to display their attainments. This makes them dismal. But in the DPRK ample opportunity is afforded to everyone, men and women, to work according to their ability.

Therefore, working women are not overtly pompous or too unyielding in their way of living because there's no need for that.

Soldiers Intent on Rice Transplanting

Recently there was a loud clamour about the "threat from the north". Would you please tell what the atmosphere was like in the DPRK, what you have witnessed and felt in the Republic?

Hidari: When I returned home, Japanese journalists raised a similar question.

No tension could be felt in north Korea. The people were busy in the campaign to ensure 40 billion maize plants and all efforts were directed to rice transplanting, a key to the bumper crops for this year. The army-men, too, were actively helping the farmers.

It was in Phanmunjom, on the Military Demarcation Line, that I met army men at their military posts.

Was the situation tense there, in Phanmunjom? No, it was not. The

demilitarized strip north of the Military Demarcation Line was all upturned and the farmers were working in the fecund dry and paddy fields. That peaceful scene was little different from the suburban picture of Pyongyang. I don't think anybody would be pleased to have such labour achievements reduced to ashes by a war. If they intend to fight a war, they would never construct so assiduously.

The Handsome Smiling Face of the President

Lastly, I heard you met President Kim Il Sung on the eve of your departure from Pyongyang.

Hidari: Our meeting lasted one hour and five minutes. The President first said to me "How do you do?" and put me at my ease. What moved me greatly during the talks was his emphasis on the policy of independence, saying that Vietnam belongs to the Vietnamese, Kampuchea to the Kampucheans and Korea to the Koreans.

He said that Korea should be reunified on the basis of three principles and the five-point policy for national reunification and that there is no change in this line, in other words, it should be eventually reunified in a peaceful and independent way.

He represented the pride and faith in the building of the country which they have carried out until now.

I deem it my greatest honour to have met the President who fought for national liberation and independence and is now leading the people along a road to prosperity.

The President looked very nice when he smiled. His beaming face was sufficient to say that he was welcoming us as his friends. Finishing our talks the President shook hands with every one of us. At the time I told him that I had learned he had an eye for "beauty" from my inspections of urban construction. He replied that he would like me to become better acquainted with his country leisurely on my next visit.

As a Japanese, I was struck by the spirit of sovereignty and independence cherished by the Korean people.

The Juche idea is the thought that puts man above everything else. This is an ideology that characterizes the DPRK, I believe.

My "Unsentimental" Journey

Odaka Yoshiko, Member of
the House of Councilors

Reception–July 1975

In July 20, 1975 I left Japan to visit Korea as a member of the delegation of the Liberal Democratic Party. When this trip was offered I accepted it "with pleasure". What was going on in the Korean peninsula where the situation is reportedly very tense owing to the Indo-Chinese situation? What is the DPRK like which enjoys understanding among and maintains solidarity with the third world countries? As an advanced socialist country of Asia, how does it carry on the building of the state? This time I couldn't keep still, looking forward to it with impatience, not like when I made a tour of the Middle East and Europe. My short trip this summer was by no means a "sentimental journey" to me.

The reality of the north-south division posed a new task before me, a politician, though it may sound paradoxical.

A lot of things have to be done by a politician for a peace to be secure. My recent travels awakened me to this truth.

The trip by train from Beijing to Pyongyang was the same as before. Lying in the berth of the narrow stuffy compartment I recalled the years when I had frequently made a 5-day trip on business. I was now on the same line, but this time my destination was Pyongyang, not Tokyo. I felt the country to be quite new to me rather than a familiar land. Gazing at the scenery that passed from my window I entered north Korea, forgetting about sleep.

What surprised me upon my arrival in Pyongyang was the very beautiful verdure of the city. I said to myself, "streets lay in gardens" To my question, they said they were platanus, acacia, paulownia, poplar, and gingko. I wonder, is there any town with such thick groves anywhere else? Flowers were also plentiful. If you drive along the suburban road you can enjoy the blossoms on both sides of the highway all along the dozens-of-kilometres long distance. They told me that these flowers

were said to have been planted by primary schoolchildren in the section divided to each school. This excited my curiosity still more. It is not an easy matter to reconstruct the streets, which were once reduced to debris during the Korean war (the Koreans call it the Fatherland Liberation War), into splendid ones with thick greenery in so short a span of time.

I asked how they had built the street so beautifully. Their answer was one and the same, "Thanks to the great leader President Kim Il Sung...." At first I felt like asking the question again, but then could understand them after I had had an audience with the President. He has traversed along the road of revolution from his early age, and at the same time he was the benevolent father possessed of an immeasurably warm affection.

He recognized me and said, "You're Ri Hyang Ran (Ri Ko Ran), aren't you? I've seen pictures of you in magazines and on the screen." I started at his words. Before my leaving Tokyo Mr. Utsunomiya Tokuma had advised me to behave prudently since the Korean people are still inimical to the days of the colonial rule. Staying in Pyongyang I was afraid that they would be unkind to me. But they weren't; there was not even a hint of a reproach.

"Assiduous working is not everything of life. Singing a song and playing an accordion is also necessary," said the President. Looking at the beaming face of the President I thought it resembled the national feature of this people. The Koreans sing songs in a ringing voice, and villages as a whole would turn out to dance.

I envy their national character, so to speak, their willingness to exhibit themselves unreservedly. Their secure life lay behind this.

The President was exceptionally zealous about education. He thinks that there can never be too much expenditure for education. The 11-year compulsory education is free, and the students are given scholarships to cover food and other expenses. Equal pay is applied to both sexes. And all efforts are devoted to the building of the country where people know no worry at all.

In Pyongyang I had had so many kindnesses shown me by women officials, that I enquired about the status of the Korean women.

In 1946 equality of the sexes was proclaimed in Korea. This provided women with the same rights as the men. For genuine equality and

the emancipation of the women, much more was desired besides the law. President Kim Il Sung secured every condition for the women to freely take part in social activities and productive labour. Today women in Korea are working in various fields. They proudly told me that the women accounted for 29 per cent of the deputies to the Supreme People's Assembly (parliament). In the light of the present situation of Japan, I thought that Japanese women should be requested to become more active in life also.

In Phanmunjom, I saw a photograph of a big tree rooted right in the railroad to Pusan. This again strongly impressed me about the north-south division, and I understood very well that it is not easy to contribute to Korea's reunification. Of course, that tall tree should be cut down through the reunification of Korea. The Korean issue is very complicated. But I would try hard to expand the scope of friendship I had made through my recent visit to Korea and let my people know more correctly about north Korea. What I wish now is to advance without marking time.

Great Kimilsungism–a Guiding Idea, Theory and Method of the Present Time

Yasui Kaoru, Former Instructor
of Hosei University

Reception–September 1975

Over fifty years have already elapsed since my study of Marxism-Leninism in my youth. I strove to develop the international law as a specialized branch of science from the world of the "explanation of law" and "sociological jurisprudence" into a section of militant social science. And I strove for the sound development of the mass movements for a ban on nuclear weapons, the defence of peace and the promotion of friendship, attempting to have them adapted to the historical conditions of Japan. In this way I was able to enrich my storehouse of knowledge with many precious lessons from the historical heritage bequeathed by the founders of Marxism and Leninism. But I always had unsatisfied feelings during my studies, that is, Marx, Engels and Lenin had lived in past ages different from ours and their ideas and theories were naturally restricted by the historical conditions of their ages.

Such a vacancy in my mind was filled only when I learned about that unique system of ideology, theory and method whose quintessence is the immortal Juche idea, created by President Kim Il Sung. This system gave clear-cut answers to my questions with encyclopaedic affluence, in width and depth. Having such an outstanding master of thinking and theory as my contemporary is the greatest happiness for a scientist like me, who is painfully pursuing the truth.

As I said before I don't deny the prominent role and contribution made by the founders of Marxism-Leninism to human history.

In the era when the fantastic trend of idealism was deluding people in varied ways, Marx and Engels, his life-long friend, established dialectical materialism which explained the world to be an integration of materials and discovered the law of its development. Thus they had placed human cognition on a scientific basis for the first time. Lenin developed

the truth of Marxism and adapted it to the historical conditions of the stage of imperialism and thus led the socialist revolution in his country to victory for the first time in history.

But a century has passed since the era of Marx and half a century since that of Lenin. In addition, the situation after the Second World War has undergone a radical change. Naturally, the new era requires a more advanced revolutionary ideology suitable to the developed historical conditions.

The principal task lies in the interpretation of philosophical theories pertaining to what is fundamental and what plays the decisive role in this material world.

The Juche idea had appeared before the footlights representing a new philosophical principle demanded by the present times. The report delivered by President Kim Il Sung at the commemoration meeting held in honour of the 30th anniversary of the foundation of the Workers' Party of Korea is a comprehensive programmatic literature of great historical significance worthy of the "library of the Juche idea" He said in the report:

"The Juche idea is based on the philosophical theory that man is master of everything and decides everything. By scientifically enunciating the position and role of man in the world, the Juche idea provides one with the only correct outlook on nature and society and with a powerful weapon to understand and transform the world."

There can be no overemphasis to the significance of the changeover in the evolution of the revolutionary idea which was effected by the Juche idea.

In October 1974, the Fifth National Scientific Seminar on the Juche Idea was held in Tokyo; in my keynote address I suggested to call the integrated system of his idea, theory and method the quintessence of which is President Kim Il Sung's Juche idea, as "Kimilsungism". This was the conclusion I had reached through my prolonged study and pursuit of new thoughts.

The International Scientific Seminar on the Juche Idea convened in Madagascar two years later had the following passage in its declaration:

"We, fully recognizing the scientific and universal significance of the integrated system of Juche-oriented ideas, theories and methods, the

truth and justness of which had been proved by respected President Kim Il Sung when he gave guidance to the revolution and construction under most difficult and complicated circumstances during the past half a century, consider it right to name this original idea after respected Comrade President Kim Il Sung."

I sent hearty acclamation to the declaration and paid my sincere homage to the comrades and friends who had done so much for its decision. It is not a simple terminological problem but a matter which has profound meaning in substance.

At the inception of my study of the Juche idea, I defined its essence as "Marxism-Leninism of our age". We cannot say this definition was completely wrong, but this cannot explain the historical position and original character of the Juche idea accurately.

My conclusion was that the Juche idea should not be viewed as a mere evolution of Marxism-Leninism and that in the light of historical development of revolutionary ideas, that is to say, Marxism in the latter half of the 19th century and Leninism in the early 20th century, Kimilsungism be placed on the highest phase of their evolution. Only then, I believe, is it possible to expound the historical position and original character of great Kimilsungism, the quintessence of which is the immortal Juche idea, to the fullest measure. If the study of Kimilsungism, which holds such a prominent position in the historical development of revolutionary ideas of mankind, is confined to a scholar's analysis to it in one way or another as one pleases and paying a high tribute to its system, this is by no means the correct attitude for a study of Kimilsungism.

Already back in the dark period, when the Korean people were suffering under the Japanese imperialists' rule, General Kim Il Sung founded the undying Juche idea amidst the flames of the anti-Japanese revolutionary struggle. His original revolutionary idea matured not in a quiet study but during short intervals between fierce battles or in the deep mountains where he, seated on a fallen tree, continued to write leaning on a flat rock like a table, or in the deep forests where he burned a midnight candle in a tent, listening to the howling snowstorms.

The Juche idea that was born of these adversities demonstrated its justness and vitality in the practice of the revolution and construction and endowed ever-victorious might to the Korean people who uphold it

as their supreme guideline in their struggle. At present the great Kimilsungism, whose quintessence is the immortal Juche idea, has become the guiding idea, theory and method not only for the Korean people but also for the progressive revolutionary people all over the world to arm themselves with unyielding firmness.

For a scientist who loves the truth, it is an honourable duty to apply this universal truth to the revolutionary practice of the popular masses and develop and translate it into reality. I, as a Japanese scholar, sincerely wish to perform this glorious task courageously and faithfully, while strengthening ties with comrades and friends of other countries.

From the historical viewpoint of the development of the revolutionary ideas of mankind, Kimilsungism, which occupies the position mentioned above, has clearly defined the present era as the era of independence. This definition has enormous significance and meaning. It is now customary for us, students of the Juche idea, to take it as a simple fact that ours is the era of independence. But when no one had a clear notion of it, President Kim Il Sung pointed to this with sharp clarity for the first time; this is due to his exceptionally intelligent insight. We must bear this in mind and have a correct idea of the profound significance and meaning of the definition of the independent era to bring it to reality.

The President said:

"Ours is an age of independence. Today many peoples throughout the world are calling for independence and are fighting against all kinds of subordination. No nation will tolerate others trampling upon its independence. Even the peoples of capitalist countries are claiming independence, not to mention the peoples of the socialist and third world countries. It is the main trend of our times which no force can check that the peoples of the world claim independence and that many countries are taking the road of independence."

Here we must be attentive to his instruction that in our age the peoples of not only socialist and third world countries but also capitalist states are claiming independence. The struggle for independence assumes varied forms and methods of struggle against imperialism, colonialism, neo-colonialism and dominationism.

I would like to refer to the struggle for independence in capitalist Japan from three angles.

First, it is the struggle against the "Japan-US Security Pact".

The "Japan-US Security Pact" in fact subjugated Japan to the USA, turned her territory into the US military base and stifled Japan's independence even after it had recovered so-called sovereignty and independence by the conclusion of the peace treaty when the Second World War was over.

This is a variant of modern dominationism. The "Japan-South Korea Agreement" signed in 1965 is closely connected with the "Japan-US Security Pact", and these resulted in the formation of the US-Japan-south Korea tripartite military tie-up. By the Sato-Nixon joint statement in 1969 the "Japan-US security" system posed even a greater menace to Japan and other Asian countries, and especially to the Korean people. Regarding the ill-famous provision on south Korea of the joint statement, Sato ranted that the security of south Korea is indispensable for Japan's security so "in case an armed attack is made on south Korea and, in order to cope with the situation, the US army finds it necessary to use the facilities and zones of Japan as the base to launch military operations, and the Japanese government, proceeding from the above standpoint, will decide its attitude in positive and swift compliance with the prearranged agreement."

The Japanese people have been waging an unflinching struggle against the "Japan-US Security Pact" pregnant with such danger and forebodings. This constituted a link in the struggle for independence.

Regrettably the struggle to annul the "Japan-US Security Pact" has not yet achieved its aim. But it is certain that it played a big part in counterplotting the Japan-US reactionary forces desperate to maintain and strengthen this tie-up.

If we are to lead the Japanese people's struggle to victory opposing the "Japan-US Secutiry Pact" and bring about genuine independence to Japan, we should learn more from Kimilsungism, that is, the guiding idea, theory and method for the era of independence.

Secondly, the struggle for independence in Japan is the struggle opposed to the forces that threaten mankind with nuclear and other mass destruction weapons.

The Japanese people experienced the holocaust of the A-H bombs three times in Hiroshima, Nagasaki and Bikini. Until now, though scores of years have passed, its survivors and their offspring are still suffering from its aftereffects. But these are not only Japanese people, there are

quite a few Koreans among them. American war prisoners, too, were killed by the atomic bomb dropped by their army. The natives of Marshall Islands are subjected to immeasurable sufferings owing to A-H nuclear weapon tests.

Japanese people have been struggling for many years against the forces threatening mankind with nuclear weapons. The number of people who signed the petitions in support of this struggle are said to have surpassed 35 million. This is a figure and scope unprecedented in the history of a mass movement in Japan. The Japanese people put great pressure by the strength of their unity on the Japanese government and won a brilliant victory in making it announce its "Three Non-Nuclear Principles", that is to say, it will not produce, possess or introduce nuclear weapons.

The US imperialists, however, are doggedly pursuing a policy of nuclear armaments and the Japanese government has begun to waver in its stand after the issue of the "Japan-US Joint Statement". The Japanese people are increasingly on the alert against this. That the US imperialists have deployed nuclear weapons in south Korea and threaten to use them in case of emergency is exciting the indignation of the Japanese people.

The US imperialists have recently developed the neutron bomb, a new weapon destructive only to human lives but not to material things. This sheds a revealing light on the inhumanity of the US imperialists. What a sharp contrast to the Juche idea which holds man high as the master and the dearest being on Earth.

The abolition of nuclear and other mass homicidal weapons is one of the pressing tasks in the present era, the age of independence. Believing that Kimilsungism, whose quintessence is Juche idea respecting man, would prove its great power also in the struggle against the forces threatening mankind with such inhumane lethal weapons, I am eager to forge ahead toward the bright future of mankind.

Thirdly, our struggle in Japan aims at social renovation and the building of socialist society.

Since the seed of socialism began sprouting in the minds of the Japanese people in the late 19th century, a struggle has been waged assuming varied forms and suffering one discomfiture after another. And the struggle for socialism claimed considerable sacrifices but not

meaningless ones. The forces of the fighters, the trailblazers, are gradually gaining strength in Japan.

The question here, I think, is how to take the right ways and means to attain our goal in enlisting this force successfully for the struggle.

In the "Joint Communique of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia", made public in Pyongyang on August 29, 1977, the following passages are given:

"President Kim Il Sung, General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Workers' Party of Korea and Josip Broz Tito, Chairman of the League of Communists of Yugoslavia, examined the general situation and moves of the international working-class and communist movements and progressive movement.

"Both sides acknowledged that heading toward socialism has become a worldwide trend and the communist and workers' parties and other progressive forces, based on their complete independence and peculiarities, are waging the struggle for socialism on a vast front.

"The multiplicity in forms and methods of the struggle waged by the working-class, communist and workers' parties and other progressive forces for social evolution and socialist construction is derived from diverse historical and politico-economical conditions peculiar to each country."

As both President Kim Il Sung and President Tito have a brilliant past of victorious struggle through which they had paved the road to independence, triumphantly overcoming extremely difficult conditions, the above passages of the joint communique appeal to our hearts with uncommon intensity.

Each country has different historical, political and economic conditions. Accordingly, there must be a difference in the method and form of struggle for social renovation and the building of socialist society. Previously such evident truth was not infrequently ignored and the practice was tolerated of mechanically copying the fighting methods and forms or forcing other people to follow one's so-called model. This caused numerous tragedies and sacrifices, ending in sad frustration.

Japan, too, has her own historical, political and economic conditions. This requires an original method and form in the struggle for social changes and the building of socialist society. Outwardly Japan seems to be flourishing politically and economically, but, in my opinion, her inter-

nal contradictions are becoming acute. They are not the sort that can be solved by some transient remedy. From the viewpoint of a social scientist, I was at pains about the fate of Japan, my motherland, before and after the Second World War. Recently this posed a pressing problem for me. At such a moment, Kimilsungism with the Juche idea as quintessence became an enormous inspiration to me. I am deeply grateful.

Now that we are facing huge tasks for the successful progress of the difficult struggle to effect social changes and build socialist society, I think we should press forward, step by step, with courage and perseverance, relying on the working people with firm faith in their strength. Concerning this struggle, I entertain great expectations on the Japanese youth who are making a profound study of Kimilsungism. A reflection of this is my appeal to the Japanese youth "What do you intend to do for the motherland?", the appeal I made in the last part of my keynote report to the Seventh National Scientific Seminar on the Juche Idea held in Tokyo in October 1975.

As seen above, I have introduced to the reader the struggles for independence in Japan from three different angles; they are linked with the Korean issue, especially with its reunification.

Korea's reunification is the supreme national aspiration and long-cherished desire of the Korean people and its basic orientation is represented by the three principles–independence, peaceful reunification and great national unity–made clear in the historic north-south joint statement published on July 4, 1972. The following year, on June 23, the five-point policy for national reunification was proclaimed by President Kim Il Sung. However, owing to diverse factors working against Korea's reunification, the years have come and gone fruitlessly even after the publication of the north-south joint statement.

It is a pity to have to say that the biggest cause of this lies in the tie-up of the reactionary forces of the US, Japan and south Korea.

For the strengthening of genuine friendship with the Korean people we must reflect upon ourselves first and take measures to bring the Japanese government into readjusting its unjust Korean policy and thus proceed by steps and stages. I firmly believe that this is the way to the happiness of the Japanese and Korean peoples, and the way for contributing to the peace of Asia and the world.

Human history is now in the last quarter of the 20th century. Hence, we must sum up the twentieth century, in other words, we must review the achievements and demerits of mankind in the 20th century and, at the same time, project mankind's future plan for the forthcoming 21st century.

Of course, giving detailed accounts of this huge task is not the purpose of my writings, but I would like to emphasize one point. That is the question concerning the complete and spiritual emancipation of man which is the object of my lifelong thought and study.

As I had given a theoretical elucidation in my important works *International Law and Dialectics,* and as I had intoned in a collection of poems, *Eternal Sketch,* I perceived human emancipation as a dialectical integrity from the following three viewpoints:

The first is man's emancipation from nature, the second is social liberation and the third is spiritual independence. I thought that man's genuine emancipation could be attained only when his emancipation from nature and society was accompanied by a spiritual one and that human history is a process of an uninterrupted advancement toward the goal of man's genuine liberation.

The human history of the 20th century has registered dazzling progress in various phases, but it is difficult to say that there was a definite step forward in the aspect of man's spiritual emancipation. Probing into this problem I made an inspection tour of many countries; in some countries man's spiritual degeneration was beyond description. That man's spiritual liberation cannot be realized by some social revolution was also proved by the human history of the 20th century.

How to extricate ourselves from such a spiritual wilderness of countless misery and social phenomena in our life is an important task that reposes on human history.

Starting from such a viewpoint I have been especially attentive to the phase of human remoulding in the Korean revolution. I think that the Korean revolution, which is wisely led by President Kim Il Sung under the banner of the Juche idea, is an epoch-making change of the social system and, at the same time, a thoroughgoing transformation of the human being.

As the President gave a general outline in his report to the commemoration of the 30th anniversary of the founding of the Workers' Party of

Korea, excerpts from which are often quoted today, the ultimate goal of the Korean revolution as a continued revolution is to achieve the complete victory of socialism and to build communism based on the proud attainments in the revolution and construction. For this it is necessary to transform society in a communist manner in all fields of the economy, culture, ideology and ethics and to conquer the ideological and material fortresses. Ideological, technical and cultural revolutions are carried out vigorously to hit the two targets, the conquest of the ideological and material fortresses.

Transformation of man is, in essence, the remoulding of his thinking, said President Kim Il Sung. He emphasized the importance of the ideological revolution as follows:

"The ideological revolution is aimed at revolutionizing and working-classizing all members of society to transform them into men of a communist type. The working masses are the masters of society, and they are the main factor that transforms and advances society. Unless they are re-educated in a revolutionary manner, all tasks arising from the revolution and construction cannot be solved successfully nor can a communist society be achieved."

As the above statement clearly elucidates, remoulding the man is the central task for the social transformation in the Korean revolution. The characteristic feature of the Juche idea, which holds man as the master of the world, presents itself prominently here exactly. I met many people in twice visiting the DPRK when looking at their behaviour and the way they work I could clearly see in what way human reshaping was proceeding. Faithful to his instructions on the popular style of work, the people must be exemplary in their everyday activity–as a revolutionary soldier who works self-sacrificingly in the van of the masses–, be modest and simple and respect and help each other; they try to live and work as he taught and thus embody his advice to set a model as people of sincerity. So they are kind to others and give very good impressions. We felt this kindness and affability more keenly as people who were used to live in the spiritual desert of capitalist society.

Needless to say, the education of the rising generation is of particular importance in human transformation. The Socialist Constitution of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea stipulates in Article 39, "The State is putting into practice the principles of socialist education and is

raising the new generation to be steadfast revolutionaries who fight for society and the people, to be men of a new communist mould who are knowledgeable, of high moral calibre and healthy." I watched with admiration that such an eduction was thoroughly being practised here in all spheres.

The Korean revolution has indicated a new way of human emancipation. To put it more concretely, with emphasis being laid on the overall transformation of man, this important yet difficult task is being put into effect through the ideological revolution.

In connection with the historical prospect of the 21st century, what role will the human transformation explored by the Korean revolution play and what type of ideological education will make it possible to overcome conventionalism and help every member of society to freely display his or her individuality? This is the question I am most concerned about.

In my congratulatory speech at the National Congress of Social Scientists held in Pyongyang in April 1972, I said, "Today the Juche idea is spread widely to five continents across the oceans and has become the motive force for social progress and illuminates the future of world history." It is to our great pleasure that the world historic significance of the Juche idea has been proven by a multitude of facts.

In the centre of this eye-opening development stands President Kim Il Sung, the founder of the immortal Juche idea and the respected leader of the Korean people.

Although it is the working masses who make and develop history, they need the wise guidance of an outstanding leader in order to creditably perform their role as the maker of history. The Korean people armed themselves thoroughly with the revolutionary idea of the respected President and united firmly behind him and pushed ahead with the revolutionary struggle and construction and thereby achieved prosperity and victory. I congratulate and praise the Korean people, who are making and developing Korean history and the world history, thanks to their respected leader.

At first I studied the integrated system of ideology, theory and method, whose quintessence is the immortal Juche idea of President Kim Il Sung, through books and then, in September 1975, I had an audience with him, when he dwelt on diverse problems ranging from the

fundamental principles of philosophy to contemporary politics. At the time he was very gracious towards me, a Japanese scholar, and readily answered the varied questions I raised. I was happy at the thought that I now had a great comrade whom I could approach with whatever problems, both academic and political, that were beyond my power. It is still fresh in my memory when, overjoyed at this thought, I strolled in the garden of the guesthouse, so beautiful with colourful blossoming flowers.

In Japan there are many working people who study the Juche idea and strive assiduously for its materialization. Among them, I know, are not a few young people who respect the President as their great tutor and leader.

Human history keeps advancing and new problems are rising endlessly to the fore from the unknown world. We ought to look up to the might of this gifted leader, this prominent thinker and theoretician who gives a solution to such problems with deep insight and exceptional farsightedness and indicates a just guideline for the working people to follow.

May President Kim Il Sung continue his noble activity in good health and render even greater encouragement to the struggle of the working people of all countries.

To Share the Joy over the Building of a Peaceful New Korea

Funabashi Nariyuki, Ex-Member of the Central Executive Committee of the Japan Socialist Party

Reception–May 1978

It was in May 1978 that I first met President Kim Il Sung when I paid a visit to Korea as a member of a delegation.

Chairman Asukata had already had a talk for hours with the President when he was Mayor of Yokohama. I often heard him recall the day. So that even his unfamiliar voice drew him to me like an old acquaintance.

Chairman Asukata sincerely admired and respected President Kim Il Sung for his remarkable achievements in the revolution and the building of socialism in Korea. Addressing a rally of Yokohama citizens and during meetings in other cities he spoke fervently about the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, giving detailed examples of the great care given to children, the solicitous concern directed to the position and role of women and the great effort made to improve the people's living standards parallel with the construction of various establishments. He said: "That I was attracted to President Kim Il Sung was not merely because his exploits were so great and excellent. Owing to his magnetic personality, that is, generous, warm and compassionate, I felt as if I was akin to him as to my blood brother. This is my frank feeling."

These sentiments of Chairman Asukata had made such an impression on me that in my unrestricted conversation with the President, although this was our first meeting, his glance, smile and sonorous voice all caught my fancy, swathing me in a veil of profound humane affection and sublime feelings.

In March 1981 I revisited Pyongyang, together with Chairman Asukata, for the signing of the "Joint Declaration of the Workers' Party

of Korea and the Japan Socialist Party on Making Northeast Asia a Nuclear-Free, Peace Zone"; in September 1987 I visited as a member of the delegation headed by Chairman Toi Takako. At that time I had the honour of being received by the President who is infinitely kind-hearted and broad-minded. These receptions increased my feelings.

Besides the official tours, I had been to the Republic singly authorized by Chairman Asukata. During my stay in Pyongyang for a few days from the end of 1980 to the beginning of 1981, I attended the New Year's art performance given by schoolchildren on the evening of December 31, where I came across quite an unforeseen scene.

That day I was favoured with a seat just behind the President's so that I was able to watch him enjoying the performance, about two or three metres from him. Sitting next to him was a person of small build who seemed a little younger than the President. The President turned to him frequently, pouring tea into his cup at a break or explaining something to him. Indeed, it was a very amicable, friendly scene.

I wondered who the man was he was treating with such courtesy and cordiality. Unable to curb my curiosity, I asked the guide about him as soon as we had returned to the hotel. He replied that the man was Samdech Norodom Sihanouk of Kampuchea. The President saw to it that a splendid mansion had been built in Pyongyang for him and his family and treated him in this way every once in a while, the guide said.

Once again my admiration grew. In those days the Kampuchean situation was still discouraging, and His Royal Highness was in a gloomy mood. President Kim Il Sung, however, was very hospitable to him and sustained him with utmost reverence and friendliness. This surpassed my imagination, and his good-natured warm personality moved me intensely and left an indelible impression in my mind.

Today Asia is about to enter a new historical period which sets in to replace the previous one. At such a dynamic turning point, normalizing the DPRK-Japan diplomatic relations, setting up and expanding the nuclear-free, peace zone in northeast Asia and achieving the independent, peaceful reunification of Korea is a pressing and unconditional task to the Korean and Japanese peoples. Otherwise, it will be impossible to fling open the door of history leading to a bright future.

The great leader President Kim Il Sung regards this to be his lifelong objective which he has to attain. It is our wish to build a peaceful new

Korea and a new Asia, and to share this great pleasure with him, as he engages in his activities in the best of health. I think that the Japan Socialist Party and I, one of its ordinary members, should devote our energy to this end.

An Interview with President Kim Il Sung

Shimazaki Yuzuru, Member of the House of Representatives and Secretary-General of the Dietmen's League for the Promotion of Japan-Korea Friendship

Reception–September 1981

I had the opportunity to meet President Kim Il Sung twice; in September 1981 and in July 1991. Though accidentally, I conversed with him, sitting next to him on his left. In my first tour I was Secretary-General of the delegation of the Socialist Theory Centre headed by Katsumada Seiichi, ex-Chairman of the Japan Socialist Party, and the next time I was Secretary-General of the delegation of the Dietmen's League for the Promotion of Japan-Korea Friendship.

My two interviews fall respectively on the early and closing days of the latter half of my 20-year-long political life until now. In those days my diplomatic orientation shifted from Europe to Asia, particularly to Japan-China and Japan-Korea relations. This alteration is closely associated with my interview with the President. My first visit to Korea was made not long after the drawing up of "The specific features of the internal and exteral situation and the policy of the Japan Socialist Party" which marked the beginning of the shift of the JSP to the political line of social democracy from that of the programme "Road to Socialism in Japan" in the 1960s. In order to confirm the justness of this shift, I accompanied Katsumada on his tour to West Germany, France, England, Spain, Italy, Sweden and other countries for discussion with social democratic parties. Following this, we visited Korea to study the theories and practices of the Workers' Party of Korea which is building socialism peculiar to it in Asia.

The Workers' Party of Korea, apparently intending to show him its high appreciation, treated Mr. Katsumada with hospitality incomparable to that accorded me during my successive Korean tour. Thanks to him, I

had the opportunity to gain an audience with the President, although it was our first visit. At a quiet guest house on the lakeside we exchanged views comprehensively for more than three hours, inclusive of luncheon, on the international situation, particularly on the situation of Asia and north and south Korea, the mission and tasks of the Workers' Party of Korea and on the importance of international solidarity between the Workers' Party of Korea and the Japan Socialist Party.

My first impression of President Kim Il Sung is still fresh in my memory. At the reception, I remember, I felt as if I were discussing matters with Mr. Tada Kaoru, ex-President of Sohyo and my respected teacher in the labour movement. The President's mass-oriented character, strong will, the passion of a statesman and his broad-mindedness ready to embrace one and all–this became manifest to my heart. I believe he is endowed with some trait with which he can make a strong impression on everyone as a politician, peerless in the world, who, as the head of state, has remained in office for more than 40 years up to this date, since the independence of Korea.

Through this visit to Korea, aiming at learning the ideas and sciences of Europe and America, I became aware of my being a man of Asia, who had a need to study the history and culture of China and Korea.

Later, after taking office as chairman of the policy planning committee of the Japan Socialist Party I began strengthening an interchange with the Communist Party of China and the Workers' Party of Korea. The experience I accumulated while in office for five years as chairman of the policy planning committee elevated me to be Secretary-General of Special Committee of the Japan Socialist Party for Measures for the Korean Question. Today I also hold the post of Secretary-General of the Dietmen's League for the Promotion of Japan-Korea Friendship. As a politician I have regarded it to be an important task to support the independent peaceful reunification of Korea and open the way to normalization of diplomatic relations between Japan and Korea and have directed my energies to activities for it.

After the publishment of the "Joint Declaration of the Three Parties of Japan and Korea" in September 1990, negotiations between the governments of Japan and Korea began but its prospects are not very optimistic. With the thought that an extensive movement for friendship and

solidarity between Japan and Korea is necessary for successfully promoting normalization of the relations between them, I accepted the post of the Secretary-General of the Dietmen's League for the Promotion of Japan-Korea Friendship in February 1991. Taking advantage of this opportunity I, in July, organized the unprecedented Korea-visiting delegation which was composed of more than three hundred members including local Dietmen throughout the country.

The second visit to Korea was made possible by the participation of supra-partisan Dietmen from the Liberal Democratic Party, Socialist Party, Clean Government Party, Democratic Socialist Party and Social Democratic Federation, a delegation which was led by Ishii Hajime from the Liberal Democratic Party, President of the Japan-Korea Dietmen's Federation.

At that time, an interview with President Kim Il Sung was realized for the second time.

A special airplane flew from Pyongyang to Hamhung, South Hamgyong Province, where President Kim Il Sung received all the members of the delegation and gave a luncheon party. During the political talks and luncheon they sat at his left side and were able to converse amicably again.

Growing older, the President's calibre as a politician became higher than ten years ago. I am grateful to him for welcoming us so warmly in a congenial atmosphere.

It was a time when I was interested to know what thoughts he had in connection with the attitude the DPRK would assume in the future amidst the upheaval of the world, the great changes in East Europe and the Soviet Union in particular, going on for several years already.

The President said that the globe is making a vast movement. I think that this was the expression he used to the effect that the DPRK is a part of the globe and changes amidst its movement.

I seemed to see in this the personality of the great veteran politician who wanted to cope gently with the situation from a firm Juche standpoint.

I wish the President a long life.

I Found That President Kim Il Sung and the Masses of the People Were United into One

Inoue Shuhachi, Chief Director of the International Institute of the Juche Idea and Honorary Professor of Rikkyo University

Reception Day–May 11, 1982

On September 17, 1990 I had the honour to be received by President Kim Il Sung, together with five members of the delegation of directors of the International Institute of the Juche Idea (Seki Kanji, Professor of Ritsumeikan University, Pak Yong Gon, Vice-President of Korea University, Kamakura Yoshio, Professor of Saitama University, Ogami Kenichi from the International Institute of the Juche Idea and Kora Arimasa, Professor of Okinawa University), ten days before Kanemaru Shin from the Liberal Democratic Party met the President at the Myohyang Mountains. I was able to hear many beneficial facts from him for about three hours including lunchtime, taking up his precious time.

The President said warmly, "It is eight years since I saw you last." I met him for the first time on May 11, 1982 on the occasion of his 70th birthday.

It was after my visit to Korea that I determined to study the socialism of Korea and the Juche idea. That first visit lasted for about three weeks, extending from March to April 1979, as a member of the first Korea-visiting delegation of the International Institute of the Juche Idea.

At that time, the delegation consisted of six members and among them was a young man who had visited Korea. He often repeated that "the President is a great man" but I thought:

However great President Kim Il Sung may be, he is just one man. Those who cultivate the farm land, mine coal and work in factories are the masses of the people. What is great in reality is not the leader but

the working masses. To stress the greatness of the President means stressing a personality cult.

However, my thinking began to change gradually. This is because I felt that President Kim Il Sung is a leader who devotes everything for the good of the country and the people, so that the people show their loyalty to him with their whole hearts.

In Korea the leader and the masses are united into one. Therefore, it was wrong to pose a topic as, for instance, "Who is great–the leader or the masses?"

The result of my first Korea visit was that I became determined to study the socialism of the Korean type and the Juche idea and, after this, I was fortunately given the opportunity of visiting Korea every year.

When I was at his first reception, the President said that the most precious thing is to unite the masses into one and if any thought makes it possible, that is good.

After he had finished speaking, I, while introducing myself, said that I had something to tell him, and remarked:

"After the Second World War I left the army and returned to the university. Tracing the origin of the war, I studied *Capital.* I believed in the validity of socialism and acted as it required. However, during my teaching profession in the university for a long time, I lost my ardour for socialism. That is when I came to visit Korea and was deeply moved by the fact that genuine socialism was being brought into reality here and that it is guided by the Juche idea.

"Moreover, I came to know through the Juche idea that man's genuine life is not a physical life but a socio-political life.

"I want to write a book on the 'question of successor' and on the Juche idea from now".

He encouraged me by saying, "I express my gratitude for your resolution."

I continued;

"I successfully finished the international symposium on the Juche idea, which was held for three days from April 9 in New Delhi, India and in which 107 countries were represented, and then flew over the Himalayas to join in the celebrations of your 70th birthday. I report to Your Excellency Mr. President that on the symposium's last day, I officiated as Chairman and the representatives of all the countries wished

you a long life in good health from the bottom of their hearts and offered their greetings of deep respect to you."

After I had finished speaking, the President discussed the world situation, the question of Japan and the role of intellectuals in Japan, and expressed his thought on how good it would be if Japan would follow the road of independence.

His reception lasted some 40 minutes but I was so tense that I was not aware even of the paper and pen placed before me.

However, when I met him for the second time after an 8-year interval, I was not alone but with a party of six. So I was not as tense as before and talked with him in a congenial atmosphere.

He said to us:

"I meet you now during a complicated world situation. The imperialists who have carried on false propaganda under the pretext that socialism is transiting to capitalism peacefully, say that socialism has collapsed at last. Practically, things are turning out as they say. The Soviet Union, which followed the road of socialism for no less than 70 years, has faced a political and social crisis and the socialist countries in East Europe make up a jumbled society which is neither socialist nor capitalist. Now that they have become a mixed society, the mention of the collapse of socialism is quite affirmative.

"By manoeuvring to ruin socialism under the name of its peaceful transition the imperialists obtained some results, but our socialists and communists came to be in a greater reaction and are exercising vigilance against imperialism.

"All the results show that the line of our Party was correct.

"What is important here is, firstly, to attach great importance to people and to remould them to be revolutionaries. Our Party stressed the fact a long time ago that people should be remoulded.

"In order to build socialism and communism, it is necessary to occupy an ideological fortress and this ideological fortress means the remoulding of people. Stress should not be laid on material alone. To examine the United States, which is said to be most plentiful materially, all kinds of vices in the world can be found there. Today, all the nastiest things in the world such as gangs, narcotics, prostitution and AIDS exist in the United States. How can it be said that there are good things in such a society?

"Next, everything should be made to serve the people. In our country, since the wartime and the difficult postwar period the policies to benefit the people, such as free compulsory education, free medical treatment, guarantee for the right of everyone to work and abolishment of taxes have been implemented, so that the people do not oppose anything. The troubles the United States looks for do not occur in our country.

"Some time ago a pan-national conference took place. Although the representatives of south Korea could not come due to the obstruction of the United States, our compatriots flocked in large numbers from various parts of the world including Japan, China, the Soviet Union, the United States and Europe. They said that our socialism is No. 1 and were surprised at the sight of the West Sea Barrage.

"That man is the master of his destiny and has the ability to shape his own destiny is the Juche idea. There is a saying that humanity prevails over the Heavens. Because we administer the affairs of state, regarding man as primary, we receive the people's support and advance and build socialism with them.

"What I want to say is that the most important thing in strengthening the socialist system is to put the politics into practice that benefit the people and make them display a creative spirit. It has been proved by facts that if one maintains independence, believes in the strength of the people of one's country and administers the affairs of state by displaying their creativity, putting the main stress on them, one can successfully build socialism. This is the truth.

"I would like to say one more thing. Today, there are a great number of people who support the Juche idea in the world. I think that in the future one should not only study it scientifically and disseminate it but also apply it to the building of an independent country and party."

The President gave us these precious instructions in succession in a loud, cheerful voice, without glancing at any notes. His talk lasted for three hours and covered various questions. We were delighted and excited to have been honoured with his reception.

We, members of the delegation of directors of the International Institute of the Juche Idea once again gave the President a pledge that we will contribute our mite towards the study and dissemination of the Juche idea and towards making the world independent.

A Common Country, Not a Special Country

Takemura Masayoshi, Member of
the House of Representatives

Reception–June 1985

Takemura, Governor of Shiga Prefecture (Member of the House of Representatives from the Liberal Democratic Party at present), paid a visit to the DPRK from June 11 to 18, 1985. During his stay in Korea he was received by President Kim Il Sung and had a talk on the promotion of Korea's reunification and the Japan-Korea interchange.

What is the purpose of your visit to the DPRK?

Takemura: The aim of my visit is to invite excellent runners of north Korea to the Lake Biwa Mainichi Marathon. Our delegation consists of some officials and sportsmen of our prefecture, a journalist of the newspaper *Mainichi Shimbun,* the sponsor, and a NHK reporter who will cover the Lake Biwa Mainichi Marathon for the whole of Japan.

We discussed the matter with the Vice-Chairman of the Korean Physical Culture and Sports Guidance Committee. He said that although the final decision would be made around October, he would try for a positive result as we had come to invite them. We were delighted at all our aims being attained.

The Lake Biwa Mainichi Marathon was initiated in 1982 by inviting the marathon runners of Asia. An invitation was sent twice to north Korea in the past, but they didn't take part in it. Previously it was attended by athletes from China, India, Thailand, Singapore and south Korea. North Korea won the first place in the Beijing marathon so, together with Japan, north Korea is considered one of the strongest in the Asian marathon. We expect that the joining of the excellent athletes of Korea would add lustre to the Lake Biwa Mainichi Marathon.

I Hope It Becomes a "Near and Close Country" Quickly

This is your first visit to Korea. Would you like to give your impressions?

Takemura: Korea is one of the closest countries historically and geographically to the Japanese. Nevertheless, it still remains a distant country during the forty years after the war. Considering historical relations, such relations are unnatural to one and all. I have set foot on the land of Korea with the desire that our two countries would become closer. Frankly speaking, our two countries have become considerably closer in my mind. Before visiting north Korea, although I had no prejudices against it, I wondered what it was like because of the stagnant interchange. But on seeing it with my own eyes, I believed this to be a very common country and not some special country at all.

I visited many places in Pyongyang and Kaesong. I became familiar with what the streets looked like and the way the people live. I could see that they were much brighter and livelier than we were told in Japan. Particularly in Pyongyang construction went on briskly. The roads are wide and there are many parks as well. It is a beautiful city in rich verdure. And it is a clean country, with no rubbish littering the streets and pleasure grounds. This is not only my personal opinion, all our members think like me.

I heard that you had flown from Pyongyang to Kaesong by helicopter. What did the landscape look like from the sky?

Takemura: I thought that Korea has many mountains just like Japan. I was told that more than 80 per cent of its territory are mountains. In the countryside terraced fields and irregular paddy fields came in sight. Land improvement was going on apace as it is done in Japan. They told me that in the plains the paddy field is re-zoned as widely as three hectares each. Rice-transplanting was over at the time, and farmers were seen weeding, their bodies bent. I'm the son of the farmer, so it appealed to me greatly. Dams and irrigation facilities were under construction everywhere, this gave me the impression that modernization was in full swing.

The Tragedy of the National Division Pierced My Heart

In Phanmunjom, I heard, you had observed the concrete barrier which cuts the south and the north mercilessly.

Takemura: the Japanese people felt that they have been deeply slumbering in peace during the forty years since the war. The sorrow, indignation and agony of a nation, which is being split into two, pierced my heart when I looked at the Military Demarcation Line with my own eyes. It seemed to me that the reality which causes tension not only in the Korean peninsula but also in the rest of the world shook me out of my slumbering state of mind. The war is over but, in one sense, it is still going on I have now come to realize what an unhappy situation it is. I cannot, therefore, but call for an early end to this abnormal situation.

Would you please tell me what you've felt when received by President Kim Il Sung?

Takemura:It was not planned at the start for us to meet President Kim Il Sung. We, of course, thought how happy we would be if we were granted an audience with him, but on second thought, we had come to invite runners to the Biwa-ko Marathon so it was too much to expect. However, our wish came to reality, partly due to the strong request of the journalist who accompanied us.

The President was then staying in Mt. Chilbo, a well-known picturesque spot in Myongchon County, North Hamgyong Province. We went there by plane to meet him. They said that this was the first time that any Japanese had visited the place after liberation.

In 1985 the President was 73 years old, but in full vigor. At a glance he looked somewhere around 60, far too young for his age. He spoke with such energy, I thought, and was so full of pep. In reference to the north-south parley, he said, "We do everything we can for the independent and peaceful reunification of Korea." Disarmament negotiations had started between the USA and the Soviet Union. If successful, it would influence the American's Korea policy and bring about bright vistas for the reunification of the north and the south, he added.

If the US army continues its occupation of south Korea, it would stimulate antagonism between America and Russia and worsen the situation not only in the Korean peninsula but also in the rest of the world.

This proceeds from the clear recognition that this problem must be made to progress, when viewed from such a broad aspect.

He assured that the parliamentary, Red Cross and economic talks now opened between the south and north would be continued in the future.

What was the atmosphere at these talks?

Takemura: The President and I smoked together. During the two hours the President puffed four cigars and I ten. His entourage told me that "the President has not been smoking recently." Only when meeting guests he would take a smoke for courtesy's sake. The President was, in fact, a heavy smoker. This meant that he was healthy. Otherwise he would have been forbidden tobacco more strictly by his physician.

He was all smiles from beginning to end and it was a very cordial atmosphere. I told him that in the old days quite number of Paekje people had lived in Shiga Prefecture and that I was born and grew up in the place abundant with their relics which are still kept there. Every time I attended a congress of Korean residents in Japan, I would say "I am a half-Korean", referring to these past relations between Japan and Korea. He smiled, listening to my words.

Pyongyang Alive with Joint Ventures

What is your opinion about the future interchanges between Japan and Korea?

Takemura: I suggested making Japan and Korea near and close countries in the traffic sphere, before anything else. In my case, the Shiga-Tokyo-Beijing-Pyongyang route took me 35 hours to travel. I told him that as could be seen on the map a direct flying route from Tokyo to Pyongyang would greatly reduce the time. The President was of the same opinion, saying that it would take only two hours and he completely agreed with my suggestion.

In reference to the exchange of journalists and trade, I asked him to think over the possibility of civilian interchange, such as the LT (civilian) trade now active between Japan and China, although it was difficult to be undertaken by the two governments at present. He said he approved of this on principle.

With the issue of the joint venture law in Korea, joint ventures seemed widely to have been undertaken with France, Switzerland and north European countries. In Pyongyang the Ragwon Department Store was opened as a joint venture with Korean entrepreneurs in Japan. I had a chance to drop in there; it was giving customers prompt and satisfactory service. A hotel begins to be built by joint venture on the Yanggak Island on the river Taedong.

The President remarked that it would be best to promote trade and joint ventures with Japan since she is a close neighbour and construction would consume less money.

As for Japan, owing to her relations with south Korea and the United States, she has closed the door to north Korea. However, north Korea continues to call for an interchange with Japan. It is true that Japan-Korea relations will not improve all at once, but, while admitting harsh reality, I think we should exert ourselves tirelessly for the promotion of interchange between Japan and Korea.

I differ in ideology, but the door will never be opened unless such views prevail among the members of the Liberal Democratic Party and conservative circles, advocates of different ideas. I should like to try as best as I can for the success of its realization.

Recollections on President Kim Il Sung

Komori Tatsukuni, Secretary of the Central Headquarters of the Buraku Liberation League of Japan and Member of the House of Representatives

Reception Day–June 4, 1985

On Sunday, June 4, 1985, we were informed that President Kim Il Sung would receive the delegation of the Buraku Liberation League of Japan headed by Uesugi Saichiro, Chairman of its Central Headquarters, through the Korean Society for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries, although the President was pressed for time owing to a visit of the leader of a political party from a friendly state in Europe.

We hastily headed towards the place where the President was waiting for us in order to save him even a minute.

He was a leader of noble presence who as the "Tiger in Mt. Paektu" had liberated the Korean people from under the yoke of Japanese imperialism and established the Democratic People's Republic of Korea as we see it today, where people enjoy a bountiful and cultural life without worries about food, clothing or housing.

Our car pulled up in front of the porch along the road which was laid in a lawn-covered spacious yard. The large door was opened by a guard. The President was standing there with leading government officials to meet our delegation.

Chairman Uesugi presented him the catalogue of our small gifts which he had prepared in honor of his Korean tour. Accepting it, the President said, "Thank you!" expressing his infinite friendship for us, with an air of solemnity peculiar to the man who had tasted the sweet and bitter sides of life.

His voice, as he said "Thank you!" was quite pleasing to the ear. His voice was hoarse yet virile and endeared us to him more positively.

Looking at the sturdy physique and imposing appearance of

President Kim Il Sung, I was overwhelmed with thinking that it was that body that lent him the energy with which he had struggled to emancipate the Korean people displaying an unbending fighting spirit against cruel Japanese imperialism.

Our party consisted of only seven. Apparently the reception hall had been designed for meetings with a comparatively larger number of people as a microphone was fixed on the table in front of every person.

A few of the government officials were sitting on the side of the President. Of course, Ho Tam, Member of the Political Bureau of the CC of the WPK, was also among them.

"A warm welcome to you. It is my great pleasure that your visit has made us friends. The introduction by Chairman Han Tok Su of Chongryon enabled us to become well acquainted with the activity of your organization. This time, I received a letter from Chairman Ishibashi of the Socialist Party (at the time). I'm very glad to see you," said the President.

At the talks, President Kim Il Sung, a revolutionary fighter, interweaved his greetings with the warm affection and joy the people would feel when they become reunited after such a long separation.

"We are well aware of this through frequent information received, though the Chongryon of Korea seems greatly indebted to you while they carry out their activity in your country. Availing myself of this opportunity, I express my profound gratitude to you."

President Kim Il Sung, who was well informed of the relations between the Liberation League and Chongryon, said as follows:

"I believe that yours is the struggle for justice. I hope that you will also be victorious in the future in your struggle against social injustice."

He knows better than anyone else through his revolutionary movement that the oppressed rise in struggle to liberate themselves as long as social inequality and injustice exist.

"I hope you will continue in future, too, to strive for the promotion of Japan-Korea friendship," said the President.

His husky voice reminded me of his noble character as the sublime of sincerity, the personality of a person who little embellishes his own life though his whole life had been one long struggle.

Then Chairman Uesugi reciprocated the complimentary words:

"We are very happy to visit your country. It has been a long-cher-

ished desire of the Buraku Liberation League. It is particularly a great honor that we have come this year which marks the 40th anniversary of national liberation and of the birth of the Workers' Party of Korea. It is very thrilling. During the five days of our stay in your country, we went to Mangyongdae, your birthplace, and to many other places. We were greatly amazed by your endeavours, the great leadership you have given up to this day. And we could see for ourselves that the popular masses positively trust dear Secretary Kim Jong Il and many other leaders of the Workers' Party."

Chairman Uesugi then switched over to the Buraku Liberation Movement in Japan and her internal and external situations.

"As you know already, we have not yet been liberated from the old feudalistic segregation. It is maintained by artifice up to the present day despite varied changes in society. The 'administrative reform' policy undertaken by the Nakasone Cabinet of the Liberal Democratic Party serves, in fact, to maintain and encourage this segregation. Moreover, the present domination of Japan by the United States is being expanded to all military, political and economic fields as is proved by the fact that the US army keeps hanging on in Japan by virtue of the Security Pact. Considering all this, we can fully understand the feelings of the Korean people, who are suffering the tragedy of a national split, owing to the domination by the United States."

Chairman Uesugi noted that the two countries had common interests for a correct study of the Japan-Korea relations in that they were undergoing difficulties due to US domination. His speech reached the natural conclusion:

"We actively support the realization of the tripartite talks (the DPRK, the ROK and the United States) and the north-south parley (on a parliamentary level) proposed by President Kim Il Sung."

He did not confine himself to solidarity with the Korean people.

"Our Buraku Liberation Movement is aimed at emancipation from oppression and, at the same time, demands to review our own activity. This is why our movement is guided by the idea of liberation which is similar to some degree to the 'Juche idea' you advocate. Today the Korean people are subjected to hardships owing to the US imperialists' policy to perpetuate the division of Korea. This also originates from the colonial policy of Japanese imperialism. Proceeding from the standpoint

of the Japanese labouring masses, namely, what they should do, we voice our strong support to and solidarity with your proposals on 'tripartite talks' and the 'north-south talks'."

Apparently President Kim Il Sung took Chairman Uesugi's sincere statement as something more than just complimentary words as he again touched the problem in his speech. I still remember with great interest President Kim Il Sung's analysis of the then prevailing situation, and the ensuing developments around the Korean peninsula.

In conclusion Chairman Uesugi hoped that socialism in the DPRK would register remarkable achievements and a leaping progress in the future.

The President followed him:

"I am awfully grateful to you for your encouraging remarks to me, to our Party and our people. Let me extend my wholehearted thanks to you. You have taken the agony of the Korean people as your own and voiced a positive support to our just struggle to reunify the country. Thank you. It is none other than US imperialism that stands in the way to national reunification. They are clinging to the 'two Koreas' plot in order to keep south Korea indefinitely under their occupation. Their excuse is to cope with the 'threat of a southward invasion'. Frankly speaking, we have no intention to 'invade the south'. We have now tried to deal with the tremendous undertaking of peaceful construction and the development of the productive forces in order to improve our people's living standards. There cannot be such a thing as a 'southward invasion'."

What President Kim Il Sung had said in a husky voice was translated by the interpreter to convey its correct meaning to us. But, from his serious complexion and intonation alone, we were able to understand what he meant to say.

In the rice transplanting season the armymen could be seen giving a helping hand to the farmers in the demilitarized zone near Phanmunjom; some soldiers were transplanting rice seedlings by hand while others were driving rice seedling transplanters.

This was a scene that contrasts with the army-first Demilitarized Zone south of the 38th parallel overgrown with weeds. This alone suffices to reveal that the "southward expedition" is false propaganda invented by the United States and south Korea.

"The United States ranted that rehabilitation would take more than 100 years. But Pyongyang and many other cities have arisen from the ashes. The entire Korean people were filled with the conviction that reconstruction would be done successfully so long as there exist the Party, the people's power and the territory," the President said.

His words helped one to gain an insight into the political credo of the man who had come through an arduous revolutionary struggle, and into his mind, full of satisfaction and pride over the attained achievements.

"We crave for an ease of tension and the peaceful reunification of the country. The North-South Joint Statement in 1972 made it clear that reunification can be achieved on the principles of independence, peaceful reunification and great national unity. But it is doubtful whether they really desire to see the country reunified peacefully. The United States is attempting to hold on to south Korea as its military base. They are hostile toward our Republic and loud about the fictitious 'threat of a southward expedition'."

In reference to the tripartite talks and the north-south talks, the topics of the day, he said:

"Last year (1984) we proposed the tripartite talks. We suggested the replacing of the Korean Armistice Agreement with a peace agreement with the United States and the adopting of a nonaggression declaration with south Korea. In this way we sought to lay the foundation of peace but the United States showed no sign of reaction whatsoever," the President said.

South Korea on its part asserts that as a sovereign state it cannot agree with the tripartite talks being attended by the USA, that this will be a disgrace to south Korea.

As for President Kim Il Sung's opinion, no matter whatever excuse they might put up they cannot deny the fact that south Korea is under US occupation. This is quite reasonable. Concerning the conversion of the Armistice Agreement concluded between the DPRK and the United States into a peace agreement is also a reasonable proposal acceptable to any foreigner.

Simultaneously President Kim Il Sung's diplomatic line is flexible. While calling for the tripartite talks on the one hand, he proposed the north-south parliamentary talks, on the other.

"This year, on behalf of the Supreme People's Assembly, we pro-

posed parliamentary talks to the 'National Assembly' of south Korea. I expect they will respond to this in the future. If they accept our proposal we will be very grateful. This will enable us to discuss measures to reunite the north and the south peacefully," said the President.

It seemed to me that the quintessence of the "Juche idea", called Kimilsungism, lay in his practical approach to reality, in other words, one–the occupation by the US army, the other–the demand that both parties, though divided, should, pursue an independent line respectively.

Consequently, the north-south parliamentary talks have reached the present stage after many complications. The DPRK, which has to carry on the building of socialism and achieve national reunification in the future, not wavering before the radical changes in the situation of Russia and East European countries, is discussing terms with Japan for the normalization of diplomatic relations between the two countries. It is true that the intergovernment parley was arranged by the efforts of the leaders of the two political parties of our country.

As for the entry to the United Nations, the north and the south recently chose to enter the UNO simultaneously. But this is also a diplomatic line borne by the "Juche-orientated" analysis of radical changes in the international situation.

This was a policy they had chosen because they were sandwiched between big neighbours and in the abyss of agony of their division.

As for the present reconstruction and development of this country, the 11-year compulsory education, which is new to Japan, was brought into effect; according to UN statistics, north Korea's grain output is on a high level internationally; the income and consumption are well balanced and the people enjoy a stable life.

I highly appreciate the fact that the achievements provided by the subject of the revolution and the "Juche idea" are essentially different as compared with East European countries and Russia.

Our talks with President Kim Il Sung lasted about an hour. When the talks were over, he came with us as far as the porch again to say goodbye. The appearance of the President as a great pioneer and brother who has fought for the sake of socialism is deeply engraved in my mind.

Six years have already passed since then, but the President is still in good health. Now the world's attention is focussed on the DPRK, watch-

ing the historical measures it takes to counteract the changeover in Russia and in East European countries.

To the Economic Interchange Transcending Social System

—Impressed by His Flexible Attitude—

Kawakatsu Den, Former President of
Nankai Electric Railway Company

Reception–in 1985

Kawakatsu Den, President of the Nankai Electric Railway Company, visited Korea in the autumn of 1985. He was the first businessman to pay a visit to north Korea after the war so that it created quite a sensation. We asked Kawakatsu to give his impressions of his talks with President Kim Il Sung and to tell about the economic interchange between Japan and Korea.

"Mr. Kawakatsu, you have been engaged in Japan-China friendship for 40 years. You deserve to be considered a man rare among the top businessmen of Japan. You visited the DPRK last autumn. What made you visit north Korea?"

Kawakatsu: Even if there exists a difference in the social systems and ideas, we must get on well together, and not bicker with each other, as members of the spaceship *Earth.* This is possible, and was proved in Japan-China relations. We have no diplomatic relations with the DPRK. It is not good for such an abnormal situation to last so long. In order to normalize relations with Korea, it's necessary to begin with civilian trade from the initial stage as in the case of China. Cultural interchange is important, but economic interchange, Japan-Korea trade, has to be developed.

If Japan feels guilty for what was committed in the days of its colonial rule, it ought to make friends with the north as well as with the south. Unfortunately, the Korean peninsula was cut into two after the war, but it's no exaggeration to say that Japan takes advantage of this division.

A few years ago I was invited to visit Korea. I had also contemplated visiting her. Unexpectedly, my hope was realized last year which marked the 40th anniversary of liberation of Korea. I thought I was lucky.

"I think you've had many occasions to visit other countries. Would you like to give your impressions of socialist Korea?"

Kawakatsu: Much is talked about the economy of Korea. Utsunomiya Tokuma, who was in Korea in the autumn of the year before last, told me that the suburbs of Pyongyang had changed beyond recognition.

I was of the same opinion.

In a word, Pyongyang was very clean. It was a surprise to me when one autumn day I saw a citizen sweeping the street with a broom. That struck my fancy.

Pyongyang is the capital of Korea, a city of proper size with a population of one million. The Metro and bus service were visibly easing the heavy traffic and the avenues were lined up with high-rise apartment and office buildings, and new apartment houses were going up in wide areas. And the people's living standards were equal.

I toured the West and the East by helicopter. When viewed from the sky, the verdant scenery was refreshing and everything on the land looked so neat and clean.

"Would you like to tell about your talks with President Kim Il Sung?"

Kawakatsu: We met at a quiet guest house in the suburbs of Pyongyang. Our car stopped in front of the entrance where he greeted us, smiling. "How do you feel, Mr. Kawakatsu?" was his first greeting.

The President said genially, "Today is Sunday. I have the time to chat with you unhurriedly." Dining, we talked openheartedly. In short, the thought that gripped me was that "President Kim Il Sung was a great man". I was 84 years old (he was then 73, 11 years younger than I), he kept up a respectful attitude towards me, addressing me as an elder brother. Considering his age, I expected him to work more energetically in the future.

We exchanged opinions on Korea's reunification and Japan-Korea relations. What attracted my attention was his opinion that the re-opened north-south dialogue and the mutual visit of the dispersed families could be solved in a package deal even if there was discord in views. As for the Japan-Korea relations, he held that it was necessary, step by step, to start from what is attainable. I thought he was an uncommon person when he suggested expanding civilian trade, not provoking the opponents in Japan and other countries. The President's flexible thinking will be conducive to opening the way to an important settlement in the future.

Already forty years have passed since the Korean division, and this makes things much more complicated. It's not the Korean people who ignited the war, but their land was turned into a battlefield so that they suffered all sorts of hardships. I learned that the President was at pains to solve these complex problems.

"What do you think of the stark fact that the Military Demarcation Line exists, dividing the north and the south?"

Kawakatsu: It's an abnormal fact. I think, it should be abolished at all costs. The buildings of the neutral zone stand in Phanmunjom where, I hope, everything will be brought to solution through discussion.

Phanmunjom is visited by tourists from the south and the north everyday. Sightseeing buses were parked in a line south of the MDL, they looked as if they were out on a picnic. The north side was serious about the MDL, and eager to remove it.

"Korea made public the joint venture law in September 1985 and is exerting itself strenuously for modernization. Any comment on this matter?"

Kawakatsu: I inspected the exhibition of achievements of socialist construction in Pyongyang. I had no time to look into every corner but did not bypass important sections. The progress of industrialization seemed more balanced than I expected.

It is a future task on how to introduce a new science and technology. Although I myself had not seen this, some people insist that the devel-

opment of the west and the east coast areas is the key to trade development.

One year before my Korea tour the joint venture law was published so that they were actively contacting foreign countries. We also exchanged memos with the Korean side, but what we need is to bring them into effect, one by one, through successive parleys. The prospect is bright, I think.

"In your 'Retrospections' published recently, Mr. Kawakatsu, you wrote that the Korean youth in Japan were steady and reliable. Have you anything to say about the young people who would shoulder the future of Korea?"

Kawakatsu: What impressed me most here was the cheerful look of the children. I also envy the country's policy to pay primary concern to the children. I visited the Pyongyang Students and Children's Palace. Children of the same age as Japanese children of the primary and middle school are being trained splendidly in about 500 classrooms in the palace. Looking at their lively faces I pictured to myself the bright future of this country. This left a deep impression on me.

From my young days I've endeavoured for peaceful coexistence with socialist states in order to see a world without wars. I want to see the young people of Japan and Korea become as one, in a friendly embrace.

Memory of My Interview with President Kim Il Sung

Kubo Wataru, Member of
House of Councilors

Reception–July 1987

President Kim Il Sung has been in his post for the longest period of any of the state leaders of the 20th century. Aged 80, he enjoys good health; he still stands at the zenith of politics but also displays the ability of leadership to cope with the ever-changing situation in the world. He is great, indeed. I first met the President in July 1987 during my first visit of Korea. He received me at a guest house near a reservoir, a man-made lake built for irrigation under his guidance.

I was told by my seniors that President Kim Il Sung always greeted guests at the entrance so I told the journalists accompanying me about it to help them in their news coverages. They did not heed my words. At the guest house a few of them entered the hall, not recognizing the President. They blushed with shame later. Anyway, his warm hospitality, his Oriental ethical manners were impressive to me.

My opinion was shared by Kanemaru Shin, the leader of the delegation of the Liberal Democratic Party, who visited Korea with the delegation led by Tanabe to sign the joint declaration of the Socialist Party and the Liberal Democratic Party of Japan and the Workers' Party of Korea and opened a new epoch for Japan-Korea relations. President Kim Il Sung called on Kanemaru staying at the guest house in the Myohyang Mountains to exchange greetings with him.

At the first talks I conveyed the intention of Toi Takako, Chairman of the Japan Socialist Party, to visit Korea to the President who had invited her right after her assumption of office, and suggested that a delegation of the Workers' Party of Korea be sent on a visit to Japan. The President expressed his respect for her role and activity, and repeated that he would be glad to meet her.

In September that year the delegation of the Japan Socialist Party led by Chairman Toi paid a visit to the Republic before she went to any other socialist country in succession to her American tour. The talks between the President and Chairman Toi were held at the Kumsusan Assembly Hall. Ho Tam, Member of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the Workers' Party of Korea was there with me. In the first place the President complied with our delegation's request concerning the *Fujisan-maru No. 18.* Chairman Toi conveyed the earnest wish of the families of the skipper and chief engineer and, on behalf of the Japanese people, requested him to send them back home. At this, I remember, he said that this was an independent juridical question, but man institutes the law so there is no question man cannot solve. He proposed that the concerned agencies of the two countries negotiate on the matter. In this way he had Chairman Toi's request gratified.

In July 1990, as Chairman of the Special Committee of the Japan Socialist Party for the Measures for the Korean Question, I visited Korea at the invitation of the Workers' Party of Korea. In order to improve Japan-Korea relations, I then suggested holding positive negotiations between the ruling Liberal Democratic Party of Japan and the Workers' Party of Korea. Consequently, an agreement was reached on the convening of the tripartite parley including the Socialist Party. This was accepted by the Liberal Democratic Party, and a new historical era was opened in Asia as a result of the signing of the joint declaration of the Liberal Democratic Party and the Japan Socialist Party and the Workers' Party of Korea through the joint efforts of the delegations led by Kanemaru and Tanabe in September 1990.

"National reunification is forever in my thoughts. The one who is not desirous of it is guilty before his forefathers," said the President. With the hope that inter-governmental negotiations start as early as possible based on the joint declaration, I renewed my resolve to exert myself to this end.

I had met President Kim Il Sung four times before. My last meeting with him was when Chairman Toi was on a visit to Korea for the second time. The luncheon party was particularly relaxing for listening to his interesting tales. As for his secret of a long life, the President replied, smiling, "Korean *insam* wine plus optimism equals longevity". One fights against it no matter what the difficulty, believing that one's efforts

are certainly rewarded; this is what optimism means, I imagine.

Recalling his statement that "Our country has neither the capacity nor the intention to develop nuclear weapons", I sincerely hope that he will play a leading role in opening a new chapter for world history, taking the lead in the endeavours for denuclearization of the world and Asia, in particular, under his guidance. In conclusion, I wish respected President Kim Il Sung a long life and good health.

The President, Resolute in Principle and Magnanimous in Decision

Toi Takako, Former Chairman of
the Japan Socialist Party

Reception Day–September 26, 1987

I met President Kim Il Sung in September 1987 and in October 1990. My first visit was aimed at having political talks, there were so many things to talk about as I recall. As soon as I arrived I headed for the Kumsusan Assembly Hall to pay a courtesy call to President Kim Il Sung. The following day, political talks were held between our two parties at the Mansudae Assembly Hall with the attendance of Ho Tam, Member of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the Workers' Party of Korea. At 10 o'clock in the morning of the fourth day of our stay I went to the Kumsusan Assembly Hall, where I again had talks with the President for two hours, during which I was entertained at luncheon.

This coincided with the beginning of the changeover from the escalation and race for nuclear armaments to nuclear disarmament and universal disarmament. It is a known fact that the proposal for making northeast Asia a nuclear-free, peace zone was raised in the joint statement when Asukata was still in chairmanship and an agreement was reached on convening an international conference for this in Japan. So what was important at the time was to decide the date of the meeting. Great attention was also paid to the proceedings of the north-south dialogue for national reunification. Another problem to settle was the case of the *Fujisan-maru No. 18* which was then in the focus of public opinion in Japan. Therefore, I pointed to the developments of the world and the situation of the Korean peninsula and northeast Asia and the Japan-Korea relations in the beginning, and then discussed the *Fujisan-maru No. 18* with him in detail.

Referring to the question, the President said:

"The question of the *Fujisan-maru,* I think, is difficult to be settled between the heads, in other words, the Chairman and General Secretary of our two parties. But this does not mean that there is no way to solve it."

My second journey was made in honour of the 45th anniversary of the founding of the Workers' Party of Korea immediately after the issue of the joint declaration by the Socialist Party and the Liberal Democratic Party of Japan and the Workers' Party of Korea. So there were no special problems to discuss, but since it was on the eve of the talks between the north and the south Korean premiers, the President told me that he was looking for an occasion to meet the south Korean premier. He said that at the time of the Seoul talks of the premiers, the demand was made for the quick release of the persons now imprisoned on the charge of their visit to the north and at this the south Korean "President" replied that he would take this matter into consideration; but it still remains unrealized so he would like to enquire about this. Sometime later, Rev. Mun Ik Hwan was finally set free, but then was imprisoned once again, and although Miss Rim Su Gyong is still detained behind bars, it is true that there was such a move.

What impressed me was that he has a clear-cut principle in thinking yet is broad-minded in making a judgement or decision at a given moment.

The President Builds an Independent Country

Egami Namio, Archaeologist
and Director of the Ancient
Oriental Museum

Reception–1988

It was 1986 that I visited the DPRK for the first time. In 1985 the first "Exhibition of Koguryo Culture" was held in Japan after the war, which induced me to make a trip to Korea. This exhibition was planned by Chongryon, and it started on the condition that data and exhibits were provided by the Korean residents in Japan. From the autumn of that year to the spring of the next the exhibition was held in ten places of Japan and became popular. Owing to the success of the exhibition, I was invited to the Republic.

At the time it was only two or three persons besides me who had been invited. However, considering that this was such a rare chance and it would be good to take along as many people as we could, we decided to form a group comprising dozens of specialists from other spheres as well as those from the Archaeologists Association. In the course of our stay, the "Seminar on Ancient Japan and Korea" was held, during which we exchanged our views with Korean historians extensively.

In the time of my visit I realized that the DPRK was a wonderful country.

This was not the socialist country described by the people who had been to this country several times before. It was a completely independent country unlike any other in the world, a country which they could by no means understand. This moved me greatly, a person who had made a speciality of the rise and fall, the prosperity and decay of many countries for long years. I wrote my impressions in a poem, "A Country of a New Heroic Epic".

When I visited Korea for the second time, I wanted to offer my poem to President Kim Il Sung for his judgement. But to my regret, I was unable to meet him then.

My meeting with him was achieved when I travelled there for the third time in the autumn of 1988.

That time I introduced the main plot of the film "Countries of Horse-Riding Tribes" to the President, which I had produced aided by many countries. The President showed a great interest in it. As a result I was given technical assistance in the production of the part on "Koguryo". (The film production technique of the Republic was excellent.)

As the President was broad-minded and willing to give assistance to us, our talks proceeded open-heartedly.

During my third visit, I became ever more deeply aware that the DPRK was an independent country led by President Kim Il Sung and built by the united efforts of the entire people. As a clear example of this, we can mention the Grand People's Study House, a library built in the heart of Pyongyang.

There the people can study freely. It has an enormous number of books as well as study halls with tape records and television, and instructors who guide the students in their studies. There were also many foreign books, including ones published by major publishing houses of Japan. There were a lot of tape-recorded data of translations at the disposal of the students and scholars. I could see that they were striving for the progress of their country by encouraging the entire people to study.

It is said that a vast scheme is generally carried out in a short span of time in this country. Everything is undertaken in a planned way–economic reconstruction, agricultural and industrial production and the construction of dwelling houses and so on, and these plans are fulfilled within the set period or even ahead of schedule.

These facts prove that the President and the people are unanimous in their way of thinking and the entire people diligently work for the building of the state so that it flourishes through the generations.

Such a process of nation building is similar to the history of the famous ancient states. Their colossal remains and relics are said to have been wrought by the rulers of those times through using slaves to demonstrate their power. But in my opinion it is wrong that they were built only by the labour of the slaves. Unless the people have a sense of pride in that they were engaging in state building it is impossible to achieve magnificent accomplishments which would shine forever in

future. Such a wonder can be created only when the entire people build a state through united efforts. The nation building in the DPRK is one such case.

The greatness of President Kim Il Sung lies in his leadership which united the people and drew them to the building of the state through the anti-Japanese movement. He maps out far-reaching policies with foreseeing clairvoyance and paves the road to carry them forward through generations to come. He anticipates in his activity what will occur in the future.

The successor to the President will have to develop further the achievements made by the latter. Accordingly this country will grow into a more developed and more wonderful country in the future.

I have come to believe this while hearing the history of the Republic and through meeting the President and many other personnel during my three trips to Korea. And this has excited a greater interest in the country.

I contemplate visiting this country again, if possible, in the near future.

I Expect the Success and Development of the Masses-Centred Korean-Style Socialism

Kamakura Takao, Professor of
the Saitama University

Reception – September 1990

1

It is asserted that the socialist system has collapsed, being spurned at present. However, the crisis of the collapse of "socialism" in the Soviet Union and the East European countries has nothing to do with this; previously the Soviet Union and the East European countries had the necessary conditions and the system for the progress and establishment of socialism, and there was nothing wrong in the main theories and principles. They collapsed because they pursued a distorted policy and system negating socialism, instead of furthering the systematic conditions to flourish and consolidate socialism; to be more concrete, they did not strengthen the toiling masses into a force capable of fulfilling their role as the subject of socialism in political, economic and sociocultural life and the party substituted the subject and exercised despotism. As a consequence, the party was divorced from the masses, ruled and controlled the masses and exercised dictatorship under the pretext of giving guidance to them. At the same time, instead of accepting the universal principles of Marxism as their principles, they made the theoretical mistake of describing the distorted principles applied to the reality of Russia as principles of Marxism. In other words, the question lies in the fact that the specific conditions or non-contemporary elements of Russia, which had to be eliminated or renovated in the course of developing and consolidating socialism, were being accentuated as if to suit the Marxist principle.

Under such circumstances, it throws doubt on the need of a leading

political party (whether the leading political party should exist or not) under socialism. Although one may not align with the Liquidationist view that the leading political party be disorganized, the ideology and position, and primarily the human character, of the leader, the brain of the party, or the leadership party, should come into question. It is now necessary to return to the basic principles of Marxism and recognize them, and make a close study of the fundamental principles of Marxism and their application to specific reality (since the time has changed and each country has its own peculiarity) and to have correct views in this respect.

Owing to the south Korean publications misleading the public by false propaganda, the Japanese people have a wrong idea about the DPRK, the contents and significance of the Juche idea as the guiding idea, the ideology, theory, method and policy of the leader, President Kim Il Sung, and his personal character, and the selection of the successor to the President, the ideas, theory and method of Secretary Kim Jong Il, the successor, and his qualities and activity in practice. As for me, I visited this country six times after 1979 when I had had discussions with Korean scholars on many occasions and an audience with President Kim Il Sung in 1982 and 1990, through which I came to know the actual situation of Korea and the definite substance and importance of the Juche idea. In particular, I studied the Juche idea created by the President and the line and policy he put forward for the building of socialism in Korea. And I was deeply moved by his noble humanity. I came to have the correct understanding that the "masses-centred Korean-style socialism" was on a steady, victorious advance. This represents the unbreakable faith in socialism cherished by the future leader and the Korean people united as one behind him. The "Korean-style socialism" was progressing steadfastly and unwaveringly even when the nation was split, the imperialist forces were intensifying political, ideological and economic offensives against socialism, and the socialist system had collapsed in the Soviet Union and the East European countries. This shows and will show the validity of the socialist theory, ideology, movement and system, and we are sure that it will not go against our expectations.

2

I would like to indicate in my own way grounds for saying that the

"Korean-style socialism" is steadily advancing. I acquired them during the two receptions by President Kim Il Sung. Firstly, it is the firm unity and organization of the leader, the Party as a leading detachment and the masses. Secondly, it is the role the Party plays in the relations between them and its duty. And thirdly, it is the firm faith in the theory and ideology of socialism, especially an independent and creative development of Marxism suited to the country's specific reality. Let us delve into the first problem.

The image of the President gave me the idea that since he is such a great leader we could now speak of the Korean revolution and socialist construction and its development.

The President said that he made it a rule to "learn from the people" and had an indefinite faith in the "strength of the people". At the time he stressed that he deemed it his duty to go often among the people to guide them in their work, listen to their demands sharing their weals and woes and realize these by all means.

"When you go among the people, you can learn a lot from them. You can also gain strength from the people, while learning from them." "The people are mighty. ... Their strength is inexhaustible, and they can exercise great power once they display their creativity. This is the conclusion we have drawn through the struggle," said the President.

Where else can we find such a great leader who has boundless faith in the people and goes among the people and advances in firm unity with them? While the collapse of the Soviet Union and the East European system had come from a party divorced from the masses, the party having turned into a bureaucratic organ, there is no gulf between the leader and the people and no bureaucratic tendency under the "Korean-style socialism".

What I want to emphasize here is the fact that it was the President's idea to find ways of building the "Korean-style socialism" to accelerate the socialist revolution and construction by giving full play to the independence and creativeness of the masses.

The President was invited to study in the Soviet Union in the initial period of his revolutionary activity. After deep meditation he declined the offer.

"I may learn the theories of Marx or Lenin reading their books. But I must learn how to carry on the revolution from the people. What I can

learn in Russia is their experience, which I will study later at my leisure. We will be fighting for the Korean revolution, not the Russian revolution, so we must learn the method from the Korean people. As we should learn while carrying on the revolution, I gave the answer that I must learn from the Korean people since I ought to make the Korean revolution."

That is what the President said at the talk with me. In the days of Khrushchev's rule, Korea was urged to enter the COMECON. "A hydroelectric power station is constructed in Lake Baikal. What about a supply of electricity to you through the power transmission line linked with it?" To this, the President had answered as follows:

"Laying the power transmission line from your country amounts to constructing several electric power stations in our country. It is necessary to have faith in ourselves and live by our own efforts. Why should we depend on others? If the Russians stop the transmission, we will suffer a serious loss." "Socialism can be built successfully when we maintain independence, have faith in the strength of our own people, give full play to their creativity and administer policies for the good of the people. This is truth proved in practice, isn't it?"

Indeed, this was a statement filled with confidence. Thus, the DPRK did not become a member-state of the COMECON and independently followed the right path for the revolution and construction. This was thanks to his unshakable belief in the strength of the people, in their independence and creativity.

3

The second problem follows, concerning the role and duty of the leading political party. The socialist or communist political party had now ceased to hold its position and to play its role as the leading political party in the Soviet Union and the East European countries. This gave rise to the assertion that the existence of the leading political party itself makes that party forsaken by the masses and bureaucratic. This resulted in the deletion from the Constitution of the provision on the leading political party.

Things were not confined to this. It now prevails that democracy cannot be secured unless the leading political party renounces its political

and social role. Is a leading political party not really necessary under socialism? Is it bound to become bureaucratic?

The DPRK is giving a realistic reply, I think, to this problem.

Right before the Korean visit of the Japanese delegation led by Kanemaru in September 1990, I had the honor to be received by the President for the second time. In reference to the basic mission of the Party, that is, to place man, the popular masses, at the centre of every thought or activity and make everything serve the people, he said:

"What I wish to say is that pursuing the popular policy and bringing the people's creativity into full play is most important in fortifying the socialist system. It is the Party that assumes responsibility for the people's lives. So the people will never object if we lead the Party to work for the benefit of the people by consolidating it." "When shaping a policy our Party, which is boundlessly faithful to the popular masses, makes it a point of going among the masses to learn what they like and desire in order to fully reflect them in that policy. Since every policy of our Party mirrors the minds and demands of the people, it is accepted by the masses and finds a thorough embodiment in the people's lives. We must regard in the future, also to champion the interests of the people and conduct every activity of the Party thoroughly in keeping with the intention and desire of the masses as the supreme principle for the Party's activity," said Secretary Kim Jong Il. This is the line followed by the Workers' Party of Korea under the leadership of the President. Only then is it possible to achieve the singlehearted unity of the leader, the Party and the masses. The ideological and organizational unity of the leader, the Party and the masses–this is precisely the establishment of an independent subject in the revolution and construction, while success in the revolution and construction is determined by the activity of this independent subject.

What caused the collapse of the leading political parties in Russia and East Europe? It was because the party which ought more correctly to comply with the will and desire of the masses and elaborate and exercise the policies representing the people's will, turned against the wishes and demands of the people. While the ideology, line and policy of the leading political party, the vanguard unit, are always correct and scientific, the thinking and desire of the popular masses want maturity and their socialist idea is immature and unsteady. Accordingly they

need guidance. Immersed in such a calloused way of thinking, they behaved arbitrarily and eventually the party was divorced from the masses and the people were reduced to a being to be controlled and ruled. The correctness of the Party policy depends, above all, upon how much it reflects the intention and desire of the popular masses, so there is no other way than to go among the people at all times to listen to and confirm what they desire and intend to do. If one puts down and despises the masses insisting on one's armchair, on an ungrounded logic as something scientific and correct, it naturally gives rise to bureaucratism. What the people desire and like in their everyday lives–labour and construction and social activity–and how to bring them into effect is the keystone in the planning and fulfilment of the Party policy.

It is not true, of course, to say that the masses are always guided by socialist consciousness in their activity. People in different social positions and jobs may seek individual or special interests and desires, and are apt to run after egocentric interests. They might also be exposed to the influence of bourgeois ideological propaganda. The Party must steadily embody the ideology of placing the popular masses at the centre and giving top priority to humanity and, at the same time, respect and protect the interests of the private individual as much as it can and see to it that the interests of the entire society convert into private interests. Thus, the Party should lead the masses with foresighted clairvoyance.

What is important here is to train the popular masses into being the subject of the socialist revolution and construction, and help them to display their independence and creativity. Enhancing the people's self-consciousness by enlightening and awakening them should become the style of Party work. At the same time the masses should be imbued with socialist ideology in everyday life and in labour, be awakened to the truth that realizing the interests of the whole society, the collective, amounts to realizing individual interests; in this way it should become the Party's duty to cultivate independent and voluntary, not coercive, consciousness among the masses. If the Party is to perform its duty, a system should naturally be secured to encourage criticism of the masses towards the Party policy and line and the position and activity of Party members.

If socialist society is a genuine society where man, the masses of

the people, constitutes the main agent and the essential qualities of man and humanity are brought into full play, there must be a universal outlook on value, an outlook which attaches the greatest value to the man-centred idea and humanity. This must become the leading outlook on value in relation to the masses. The leading political party should maintain and perfect this outlook on value and ensure the leading role of the ideological consciousness toward the masses.

However, this outlook on value which should be maintained in the guidance of the masses, should never be a coercive one imposed by others but an outlook which should be based on the everyday lives of the masses and which the masses would accept on their own initiative.

In the Republic whose guiding idea is the man-centred Juche idea, the importance of the Party has been demonstrated in practice through the building of a genuine society where the popular masses are prized as the subject of revolution and construction.

4

Thirdly, I should like to refer to faith in the socialist idea and theories and, in particular, in the independent and creative evolution of Marxism suited to the specific conditions of the country.

What President Kim Il Sung had emphasized when he received us was a firm faith in socialism.

"I would like to stress that even in a complex situation one should never be pessimistic about the future of socialism and that socialism will certainly win while capitalism will fall in accordance with the law of historical development," said the President.

"In fact, the United States is rich in material wealth as the boss of the capitalist world. But all kinds of evil all over the world such as gangsterism, drug addiction, prostitution and AIDS are concentrated there. South Korea is also said to have become rich in material wealth. But every year 150,000 children are sold abroad and women as harlots. Nevertheless, they are advertising their country as a most developed state. What is the use of such development? The rich are becoming poorer mentally. What will become of such a society?" The question does not lie simply in the abundance of material wealth but in the purpose of its use. What is more important is the idea and consciousness

of the people. Basing oneself on man-centred consciousness, one should act as the subject of society.

"Our Party has long been endeavouring to make the people as a whole revolutionary and working class. Nothing can be achieved unless we make them into revolutionaries, working class and intellectuals. In this way we will build a society where people will help each other under the motto, one for all, all for one, and only then will material wealth prove its worth to the full," the President remarked.

It is not only the idea and theory that gives one faith in socialism. One acquires faith seeing that socialism is developing steadily, in the reality of the Republic and is moving ahead independently and creatively to suit the specific conditions of Korea, instead of following the general theories of Marxism or socialism.

The Korean revolution was carried out in conditions typical to Korea–anti-imperialism, national independence and the abolition of the feudal rule. Varied tendencies were revealed in the implementation of the revolutionary lines. Especially important here was the struggle against pressure from without and the factionalists. It was also inevitable to fight against the two extremes of dogmatism and revisionism and against hegemonism and the flunkeys.

The war waged by General Kim Il Sung to win back national independence against Japanese imperialism was a struggle he carried out independently and creatively after he had correctly grasped the specific conditions of Korea. In the fulfilment of the revolution, the establishment of the people's government and the promotion of socialist construction, correct lines and policies for construction were endorsed based on the analysis and understanding of the concrete circumstances and conditions of Korea before they were put into effect. It was necessary to promote the ideological, technical and cultural revolutions, regarding the popular masses as the independent subject in the building of socialism and to lay stress on the ideological revolution for the people. Indeed, establishing Korean-style socialism is the decisive factor for the steady advance of socialism.

By developing Marxism independently and creatively, free from "dogmatism", they founded Kimilsungism based on the Juche idea. This served as a practical example in making up what is wanting in Marxism and overcoming revisionism and dogmatism, and is an invaluable con-

tribution to the development of our theories and policies.

Finally, I would like to note that President Kim Il Sung is very humble and has no desire for hegemonism.

When we first met the President, a member of our delegation said: "It's my earnest hope that you will make a great contribution not only to the Korean revolution but also to the world revolution."

At this the President replied:

"Thank you. But I have no mind and no strength to guide the world revolution. I believe that if our simple experience is introduced by other people some of it would be helpful to them."

His statement represents the independent standpoint. In every country the revolution should be carried out independently on the strength of its own people and such a practice as to force others to follow its revolutionary policy should never be tolerated. The Japanese revolution should be carried out in an independent and Juche-orientated manner by the efforts of the Japanese people in line with the policies that suit Japan. This is what I learned at the reception granted by the President.

A Soft Wind Blowing in the Peninsula

Takagi Ui, Vice-Director of the Electric Communication Company

Reception Day–May 13, 1991

It was May when I visited Pyongyang, in beautiful spring, so remarkable with its refreshing breeze and fluffy willow seeds drifting in the air. Roadside trees, such as the cryptomeria, apricot and poplar, were turning green and the air was fresh and clear. People were walking briskly up and down the streets, their bodies straightened. A wonderful scene, indeed. Just as somebody put it, "Pyongyang is a city in the park", it was a "garden city in the beautiful wood", a modern city, presenting a harmony of nature.

Apartment houses for 50,000 families are under construction. It appears that construction methods differ much from those of Japan. Every flat has three rooms in general.

When these apartment houses and the 105-storey Ryugyong Hotel, which is 323 metres high, are completed, Pyongyang will change its image more splendidly.

A Talk with the President

"Take your family with you the next time you come in summer. It's nice to ascend Mt. Paektu. It's probably something like Hokkaido of Japan. Fine scenery and very cool. Do as I say." The President said this after I had told him that, "I have to return after a week for business" He spoke to me as if I were his nephew, without any formality.

He was in good health and looked very well so that it was hard to believe that he would be eighty the next spring. He had a sonorous voice and, when he grew heated in speech, he would address you, gesticulating energetically.

Our talk lasted about an hour when the President, rising from his seat, led us to the adjoining room, saying, "Let's take a meal together."

Hors d'oeuvre, pine mushroom soup, pancakes, roasted sirloin,

broiled eels, Korean rice cake, shrimp-mixed rice hash, fruit and other delicious dishes were served.

He continued while dining:

"When we were engaged in the anti-Japanese guerrilla struggle the farmers would remove dried stalks from some potato plots, not taking in the potatoes and let the guerrillas know about it. The Japanese army would think that the potatoes had been harvested in that plot.

"Later we dug up and ate those potatoes. The remainder was left untouched in the plots to winter. They were frozen like stones during winter. At our wit's end we would squeeze the juice from them. We then dried it to get starch and made noodles with it.

"Some time ago I treated a guest to *naengmyon,* the cold noodles made of this starch. He was surprised at how good it tasted and asked me to tell him how to make it. He was surprised once again when I told him all about it."

Here the President had spoken of "Mr. Tora of Shibamata".

"The film about Tora was interesting."

"Yes?" I unconsciously remarked.

"Uh, 'A Man's Trouble'," he said in Japanese.

"Mr. Tora of Shibamata, Sir?"

"Yes, I enjoyed it."

"What good do you see in him?"

"He has the spirit of the Japanese. Touring abroad, I'm sure it was Hawaii, he wears a shirt without collar and Japanese wooden clogs with Western coat... He says when others try to dissuade him, 'No. I'll go in this attire because I'm a Japanese'. In Hawaii he visits a Japanese restaurant to take bean paste soup and rice. He has the pride of a Japanese." The President ate with a good appetite. He tried every dish served and emptied his glass filled with *insam* (ginseng) wine. He told me, "Do try this, this is Korean rice cake".

Six Grandchildren

"I have three grandsons and three granddaughters. On Sundays I spend hours with them, it straightens me out."

As a leader of the world, he plays with his grandchildren on Sundays. This must be a rare instance, I suppose. Looking at the face of

the President which brightens up at the mention of his grandchildren, I felt his warmheartedness and attachment to his family. I felt honoured to have had such a serious conversation with him.

Our conversation lasted about two hours in a cordial atmosphere.

In conclusion, in reference to the normalization of diplomatic relations between Japan and Korea, he remarked:

"The Japan-Korea relations have already become normalized between Mr. Kanemaru and I. The trouble is that the foreign ministry officials are making things complicated."

The international situation around the Korean peninsula is very grave and is taking a critical turn. While visiting Korea this time, I felt a soft wind blowing in the DPRK.

The long and grand voyage of the Republic to international society will certainly turn into peaceful sailing due to the skilful steering of President Kim Il Sung and Secretary Kim Jong Il.

In the end I wished His Excellency President Kim Il Sung a long life in good health.

President Kim Il Sung Who Has Appreciated "Mr. Tora"

Tsukuda Tamotsu, Editor of
Yomiuri Shimbun

Reception Day – May 13, 1991

"Oh, I remember you. I'm glad to meet you again. You're an old acquaintance of mine. A hearty welcome to you."

President Kim Il Sung held out his large hands to grasp mine. Being the head of state, he was very informal in receiving me. His voice was husky yet resounding. It did not seem true that he would soon be eighty.

The talks I had with the President after a lapse of 20 years took place in the suburbs of Pyongyang in the morning of May 13, 1991.

It was very difficult for a foreign journalist to meet the President. In the DPRK the President is the same as if he were God. He does not think so but the popular masses think of him in this way. He is a man of large build as an Oriental in the present age; his great stature itself tells of the history of the Korean revolution.

Towards the close of 1971 Takagi Takeo, special correspondent and advisor to the editorial board of *Yomiuri Simbun*, visited north Korea for the first time. Later he became the first Director of the Society for Japan-Korea Cultural Exchange. Ten years ago he died at the age of 75.

My current visit to Korea was to accompany Takagi's eldest son Ui and his second daughter Furugawa Hadae to Korea in memory of the 20th anniversary of Takagi's first visit to Korea and simultaneously to gather news of the latest situation of north Korea.

When the late Takagi Takeo had been engaged in news coverage in north Korea during the two months, starting from mid-December 1971 to mid-February the following year, I accompanied him. Therefore, I was the man to accompany his bereaved families. At the reception hall the President received the two families of the deceased and me warmly, as if he was meeting his own families.

"Your father wrote much, and published many books about Korea. And, as the Director of the Society for Japan-Korea Cultural Exchange he made a great contribution to the friendship of the Korean and Japanese peoples. It is my greatest pleasure that you have come as the second generation in memory of your father". He added, "I heard that this time you are unable to stay here long. I hope that the next time you come on a longer holiday you will be able to acquaint yourselves with the reality of Korea from different aspects.

"In summer you could ascend Mt. Paektu and rest at the summer resorts below the mountain.

"Mr. Tsukuda, this is your seventh visit, I was told. I'm sure you've been to major 'congresses or celebrations'". That is how he continued the conversation.

Presently the President rose, saying, "Now let's have lunch together." A man of imposing stature, he walked ahead of us into the adjoining dining hall.

"The doctor warned me not to drink wine," he laughed.

But he gladly emptied a glassful of *insam* wine and had his glass refilled. During the full courses he moved his chopsticks busily, scanning the menu at times. He was a hearty eater.

It took about an hour during which the President touched on various matters, playing the part of a kind host. Then he spoke of the Japanese film series of Mr. Tora.

"Recently I appreciated Mr. Tora's film 'Man's Trouble', twenty-four reels altogether. I enjoy Japanese films, acquainting myself with the culture, life and economy of Japan. In this sense, I have no criticism of 'Japanese films'. I enjoy it for pleasure's sake."

"Yes," or "Certainly, Sir." Thus responding to him, we listened to him speak. He continued:

"But the central character, Tora, is very proud of being a Japanese. Touring overseas, he eats Japanese bean paste soup and wears *getas*. Tora is similar to me in what he thinks. Tora's role is a success, I'm looking forward to the coming series." As an Asian also, he enters into Tora's feelings and has become his fan. This is his real image! I was struck with admiration during the conversation.

Mr. Takagi and Mrs. Furugawa told the President about their families, children and grandchildren.

"Bringing children up needs much effort, but I love my grandchildren very much," he said.

His grandsons and granddaughters are not known to the public yet. So I asked him, "How many grandsons and granddaughters do you have?" At this he replied, beaming brightly: "Three grandsons, three granddaughters, six altogether. I enjoy Sundays with them, it's really wonderful to play with them."

That evening, I declined the scheduled inspection. In order to send the manuscripts about the interview with the President to Tokyo I was preparing two variants, one was a political one and the other was a "tender" one. Then the instructor of the Korean Society for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries, who was my guide, walked in. "What are you going to write about in your manuscript?" he asked. From his standpoint, he seemed to be concerned about it. I had nothing to hide from him, so I let him read the manuscripts of the "tender" subject which I had finished first.

He ran his eyes through it and then asked, "Do you intend to transmit this?" But he said no more. I could see what he thought.

I told him, "The story about the film series of Mr. Tora and the story about his grandchildren–these may seem trifles to you. However, should the Japanese reader learn these phases of the President they would feel attached to him, the leader of north Korea, as a human being who shares sentiments common to the Asians. Now that the Japan-Korea parley was opened this is of great importance. I can assure you of this with all responsibility."

Back home, I received many questions from our newspaper people and from many others. "Your report about Mr. Tora's series was very interesting."

"Does the President see Japanese films or videotapes?" "Atsumi Kiyoshi and Director Yamada Yoji must have been pleased to read this." All had read my writings.

It was in the evening of December 31, 1971 that I met the President for the first time. On the eve of New Year's Day he would meet pupils and children and enjoy the art performance given by them to greet New Year's Day. That year the art performance was given at the Pyongyang Students and Children's Palace in the heart of Pyongyang.

At that time he was the Premier. The moment the Premier appeared

at the entrance of the palace, the children, representatives of the pupils rushed up to him with loud cheers and surrounded him. The children, each trying to grasp his hand, conducted him into the guest room.

Prior to the performance, Takagi Takeo and I were introduced to the Premier who was sitting in the guest room together with other Party and government leaders.

"On behalf of the Korean people I extend New Year's greetings to you, representatives of the Japanese people." That was what he said first. Takagi said, "Of the heads of state the world over it is only Your Excellency Premier who attends children's New Year s Day celebrations." "Thank You," he responded in a loud voice.

Smiling, he explained:

"The main thing is that the children are delighted at my joining them. Another thing is that we grow younger among the children."

"The children are the kings of the country" is an usual expression in this country. This means that the children who are to shoulder the future of the country are held dear.

When we felt sort of tense on our first meeting, he said, "Have a cup of tea, please," or "Light your cigarette, please." "This is the first time for me, too, to see New Year's Day in together with Japanese journalists," he said, much satisfied.

Then he asked how many days it took us to come from Tokyo to Pyongyang. We had left Haneda Airport on December 12. (The Narida Airport did not exist as yet.) Japan had no diplomatic relations with China at the time. So we first flew to Hong Kong. The next day we went to Guangzhou via Shenzhen and from there flew to Shanghai and Beijing and, after making a detour, arrived in the Pyongyang Airport on the sixth day after we had left home.

Listening to our explanations, the Premier remarked, "Japan and Korea are very close for distance. Only a two-hours' flight." "I saw in a Japanese newspaper such an expression as 'Close yet distant country' In fact, they're very close. What has torn them so far apart? The peoples of our two countries are very close in their minds. Let us unite our efforts in 1972 and try to promote amity and friendship to bring our two countries closer to each other. Greeting the New Year we will take this kind of a pledge, shall we?"

He was as excellent an agitator as I had heard.

The Japan-Korea relations 20 years before were in the "age of winter". That a Japanese journalist visits Korea was almost impossible then. So we had been restless with the journalist's inquisitiveness for an unknown country and were under an increasing strain.

Luckily our visit to Korea had been decided and we called on Chairman Han Tok Su of the General Association of Korean Residents in Japan (Chongryon) who congratulated us heartily. Suddenly he spat out bluntly in an angry tone, "I envy you since you can visit the Republic. We're not allowed to visit it, though it's our homeland."

No doubt the image of the Republic, which he had never seen as yet, loomed large in his mind's eye. At the same time I believe, his heart was full of complaints towards the Japanese government for banning free travel to his homeland.

In north Korea the Korean Society for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries is now in charge of affairs relating to the entry of foreign civilians.

In 1971, the Central Committee of the Korean Journalists Union was hosts to journalists like us. The chairman of the journalists union was Jong Jun Gi, who was responsible editor-in-chief of the most influential *Rodong Sinmun*, the organ of the Workers' Party of Korea.

Chairman Jong looked after us very kindly during the long severe winter period. One day he said, "You've met the Premier three times, you really are lucky people."

Three times? I doubted that. Chairman Jong explained: we first met him prior to the New Year's art performance held on December 31; secondly, at the banquet which followed the art performance we conversed with the Premier and toasted his health; and thirdly, on January 10, 1972 we had tete-a-tete talks with the Premier for three hours and forty-five minutes. The summary of this third meeting was frontpage news in the morning edition of the 11th issue of *Yomiuri Shimbun* and detailed accounts followed in its 14th issue covering the frontpage and another one.

What is still fresh in my memory is his statement that "Our teacher is the popular masses. We always learn from them".

In conclusion he added:

"Don't write about me. This is my request."

The late Takagi Takeo was awarded the Friendship Order 1st Class

thanks to the solicitude of President Kim Il Sung. His eldest son, Ui had received it before he returned home.

I was granted an audience with the President four times; every time Chairman Jong (advisor to the Korea-Japan Amity and Friendship Society) was present as the responsible worker of the host organ. It seems that this was also connected with his work.

The cold war between the East and the West has ended. But the international situation is extremely difficult to the DPRK in connection with the changeover in the Soviet Union and the East European countries, the establishment of diplomatic relations between the Soviet Union and south Korea and the simultaneous entry of the country's north and south into the United Nations.

Considering this present situation, we can say that President Kim Il Sung at the helm of state is in more difficult conditions than in the days of the past Korean war.

This country is guided by a practical philosophy, namely, the Juche idea created by the President.

Strictly abiding by the principles of independence, self-sustenance and self-defense, the country had come through the Korean war and the oil crisis and exerted desperate efforts for modernization in nation building. To counter the disruption of the East European socialist countries, which started from autumn 1989, they had raised the principles of "Korean-style" and "We do it our own way" in order to ward off strange influences.

Meanwhile, from the autumn of 1990, the Republic has continually taken practical lines and policies, such as the declaration of the Japan Liberal Democratic Party, the Japan Socialist Party and the Workers' Party of Korea, President Kim Il Sung's proposal on the normalization of Korea-Japan diplomatic relations, the parleys between the two governments, the announcement on the entry into the UN and the line on accepting nuclear inspection.

These policies naturally turn my thoughts to President Kim Il Sung. They remind me of the traditional versatile tactics he has taken from the days of the anti-Japanese struggle. In addition, I cannot but recognize what is called the wisdom of a peninsula that is located in northeast Asia, independently of China on the continent and Japan on the island.

In the centre of this stands President Kim Il Sung, famed for his human virtues woven with varied episodes from his childhood, and, to borrow a Japanese expression, he has depth in his traits.

Speaking of the past 20 years I have witnessed, little change is observed in this respect.

The 21st century is drawing closer. It is nearly half a century since Korea was split into the north and the south. How would he resolve the question of the north-south reunification, the greatest aspiration of the Korean people? How would he bring to a solution the relations between Japan and Korea? Now that I have a certain idea of this country, what I wish is that he would enjoy as good health as ever and take some flexible policies for Asian peace.

The Country Is Constructed Quietly in Our Way

Maeda Yasuhiro, Editor of
the *Mainichi Shimbun*

Reception Day–September 11, 1991

When the DPRK attracted attention in the international arena in connection with the realization of its admission to the United Nations, the question of nuclear inspection and the Japan-Korea negotiations for the establishment of diplomatic relations, I was invited by President Kim Il Sung to luncheon in Pyongyang and had the opportunity to listen to him for one and a half hours. The President indulged in some cups of *insam* (ginseng) wine; he had a fiery energy beyond his 79 years and spoke about the world situation, and even about how much fun he had with his grandchildren. Thus, he showed me how good his health was.

I visited Korea for two weeks from the end of August for the fifth time and I prolonged the visit for another week because I was asked to attend the ninth of September celebrations of the 43rd anniversary of the founding of the Republic. On commemoration day I was invited to the banquet and grand soiree which were held under the auspices of Vice-Presidents Pak Song Chol and Ri Jong Ok.

On September 10 an official of the Party Central Committee told me: "President Kim Il Sung will receive you tomorrow."I never expected him to receive me.

As at the Versailles Palace, there were graceful cranes in the courtyard of the Kumsusan Assembly Hall where the reception would take place.

I greeted the President who came out to a hall bright with splendid clustered chandeliers, saying, "I esteem it an honour to meet you like this. Good health is most important to you". At this, he warmly pressed my hand, saying, "Thank you" "Let's pose for a photograph to begin with", he said, so we posed for a souvenir photograph with a background of a magnificently embroidered beautiful mountains which filled

up the wall.

I heard later, the President seldom, if ever, poses for a photograph with a single foreign journalist.

Luckily I was told that the luncheon was arranged in my honour and that of the friendship delegation of Aichi Prefecture led by Kuno Chuji, the ex-President of the Japan-Korea Dietmen's League that was visiting Korea.

The President entered the luncheon room across the hall ahead of us.

Mr. Kuno was seated at his right, and I at his left side. And Secretary Kim Yong Sun and O Mun Han, Vice-Chairman of the Society for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries, sat with us.

Leading off by mentioning the eruption of the Unzen Volcano, the President said, "I hear great damage was done in Kyushu" Mr. Kuno said, "The inhabitants are suffering terribly." Until the previous day I had made a tour of Phanmunjom, Kumgang Mountains and Myohyang Mountains by car and train. Everywhere I could see stretches of paddy and maize fields.

I asked, "What does the crop promise?" At this he smiled with satisfaction, saying, "I've made a tour of the northern region and found that a bumper harvest is anticipated this autumn".

Sometime before, that is, from August 20, the President had been giving on-the-spot guidance in North and South Hamgyong Provinces on the eastern coast for 18 days.

The President's face was darkish as it had got sunburnt during his on-the-spot guidance. It was on the TV news cast every day that, wearing a broad-brimmed hat, he inspected large and small cooperative farms and the modern Hungnam Fertilizer Factory, Musan Mine and others.

I knew that the Third Seven-Year Plan extending from 1987 to 1993 is being carried on in the Republic and the final goal of grain production is set at 15 million tons, and is going ahead successfully.

In this country where an original line of independent national economy is followed, successful agricultural production serves as a basic condition for all construction plans. The most important principle among all the President's policies in which independence is stressed is not turning to foreign countries for provisions and it was one of the happiest news I

had heard in circumstances when many countries were suffering from agricultural stagnation and crop failures.

Before the Koryo Hotel, my lodging house, in Changgwang Street restaurants called eating houses stand in a row. Some years ago they had few customers, but now they are filled with ordinary folk from noon till evening. I saw people amusing themselves in the pleasure grounds and suburbs enjoying varied delicious food at lunchtime. Some roasted meat and others toasted oysters. It seemed that there was a sufficient supply of provisions.

The Republic follows the policy of improving people's living standards in the order of "food, clothing and housing". In this connection, the President stressed the guidance of Secretary Kim Jong Il: "We are building Thongil Street, a new residential street in Rakrang District. Have you seen it already? Each flat has from 3 to 7 rooms. Some 20,000 families are still living in small, one- or two-room houses; they want to move to larger houses. So this year Secretary Kim Jong Il gives guidance in person so that the building of all public institutions is suspended and all efforts are directed to housing construction."

I have wanted to mention here the fact that the President has already seen through that "feeding people well is communism" and is now directing his attention from increased production of provisions to a qualitative improvement of housing.

Letting us get a glimpse of his good knowledge of Japan, the President said, "I looked at Mr. Tora's 43-part serial film 'A Man's Trouble' to find out about Japan's serious housing shortage".

To this, Mr. Kuno responded: "In Japan, the price of land has risen so that it is difficult for young people to have houses. I envy the Republic."

After taking some small cups of *insam* wine, the President urged me to drink a toast. I asked him repeatedly, "How much wine do you take?" With a wine cup in his hand he looked delightful, saying "My doctor allows me 60 grammes daily". This made those present feel a strong affinity with him. When I again asked him, "How much is that, if that is measured by this cup?". He replied, "three cups" but he had already taken five or six cups.

Pointing to his body, he said, "My body is sound," and continued, "Still, I can work for ten years more". At this, Mr. Kuno said, "You can

work to a hundred years of age". "Thanks. But I think that I have to work hard for some ten years", the President replied significantly.

"I enjoyed tennis up to the age of seventy-five but my doctor made me give it up because it was too strained for me. He can't always say only good things... Oh, I don't mean what I say. Recently I've been exercising in this way alone". With this, he explained how to handle an indoor bicycle, imitating pedaling it with his hand. When Mr. Kuno said, "I got up a 10,000-step walk plan and carry on with it", he said without waiting for an interpretation, boasting of his good health. "A 10,000-step walk plan? It's not necessary for me because I walk a lot every day".

"Do you sometimes go to the recreation grounds in the city with your grandchildren?" To this he responded; "Of course. I'm also a human being. However, officials in the International Department and others come to me even on Sunday with documents, asking me to ratify them so my grandchildren are offended, saying the International Department tries to separate their grandfather from them". With this, he pointed to Secretary Kim Yong Sun (Director of the International Department) who was at his side and bantered him. Seeing tall Secretary Kim Yong Sun ill at ease, we smiled.

On the table there was a bill of fare written in Japanese and each time the dishes were served, the President ascertained them and urged those at his sides to try them, saying "Help yourselves".

The talk veered around to the situation in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. As it was right after the collapse of the "head house" of socialism, which had occurred just three weeks before, I was anxious to hear the President's opinion directly.

He began to speak of his own accord.

"There are those who, if it rains in Moscow, put up an umbrella though they have no rain."

Using this simple and funny simile, he laughed loudly. Then he stressed that the lack of independence is connected with the collapse of the socialist countries in Eastern Europe and remarked: "Seeing the events which were going on in the Soviet Union we thought 'if a thing is palatable to us, we should take it, and if not, we should shake it off', and maintained the line of socialist construction of our own type.

"We did not join either the Warsaw Treaty Organization or the COMECON. In those days many people gave a hurrah for the socialist

community but now it has disappeared totally." With this he gesticulated, opening his hands, "Where can we find it?"

He added: "When the Communist Party of the Soviet Union was dissolved, Secretary Kim Jong Il sent a letter to the young people who would shoulder the next generation, appealing to them, *Young Men and Women, Be the Vanguard Unfailingly Loyal to the Party and the Leader.* I think that the slogan is right."

In the Republic a number of developments ranging from the political change of government on the 19th of August in Moscow to the dissolution of the Soviet Union were called "events in the Soviet Union" and the events which were going on in Moscow were reported every day through the organ of the Party *Rodong Sinmun* and TV.

On August 24 President Gorbachev resigned as General Secretary of the Communist Party and put an end to the history of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union which had existed for 74 years. This gave a great shock to the Republic which had maintained lengthy close and friendly relations with the party, I think. However, unlike the Soviet Union, the Republic made the firm resolution to maintain the socialist line of the Korean type.

The letter of Secretary Kim Jong Il which was mentioned by the President is the one which, after the 28th of August was set as the "Day of Youth" for the first time in this year, was published under the title *Young Men and Women , Be the Vanguard Unfailingly Loyal to the Party and the Leader* in commemoration of this day.

The letter stresses: "The socialist cause in our country was pioneered by the anti-Japanese revolutionary fighters, the young people of the first revolutionary generation, under the guidance of the great leader. It was inherited and developed brilliantly by the young people of the second revolutionary generation."

Then it appeals to make continuous revolution: "We should continue the revolution to reunify the divided country and complete to the last the revolutionary cause of Juche, the cause of socialism. This heavy and honourable task devolves on young people, the successors to the revolution and militant standard-bearers."

Explaining the events in the Soviet Union, the President readily suggested that Secretary Kim Jong Il administered the whole of the affairs of state. He said: "We did not intend to propagandize our country

abroad. We want to build the country quietly in our way."

This shows that the Republic is full of self-confidence in the "maintenance of the socialist line of the Korean type" contrary to the designed opinion of the Western countries according to which it is in confusion under the great influence of the social upheaval in the Soviet Union.

The President has a remarkable flow of ideas and words. His topic of conversation was not confined to one point but changed successively in the intervals between toasting and taking a meal.

The talk went into minute particulars which could not be omitted. "Have the President and Secretary Kim Jong Il any plan to visit Japan at any time?" "Thank you. I do want to visit. But after the establishment of diplomatic relations between Korea and Japan. ..." He added: "It is necessary for the Japanese Prime Minister to visit our country even before it."

"What do you think about Korea's reunification?"

"Japan had been clinging to the Korean peninsula for 36 years. After that the United States has been sticking to it for no less than 46 years. It seems that south Korea is a tasty greasy meat. The United States will not let it go for quite some time. However, as Japan becomes ruined, the time will come for the United States to leave it." The President said this eloquently and satirically.

To a question asked in Japanese he replied without turning to the able interpreter Mr. Hwang Chol at his side. It seemed that he understands Japanese easily.

"Japan has become the biggest economic power in the world. It is also the biggest creditor power. This is the outcome of the labour of the Japanese people. So, there is no need for it to bow and scrape any longer before the United States which has been reduced to the biggest debtor power. Japan should act on its own judgement now."

The sword which cut the United States now turned on Japan.

It was for the first time that, immediately after the fourth negotiations for normalizing diplomatic relations between Japan and Korea held in Beijing towards the end of August had ended without results because the Japanese side raised knotty problems, the President made mention of Japan-Korea negotiations in person.

When Kanemaru and Tanabe visited Korea in September 1990, the President had proposed the negotiations between Japan and Korea. So, today when a year has passed, every word he had uttered then was

brought with the hope of bringing the negotiations to a close by all means.

"Your country's admission to the United Nations (September 17) is only a week away now." To this the President concluded: "It is a measure we took unavoidably because our country opposes south Korea's separate admission. Our final goal is national reunification."

The cup of *insam* wine which was before the President disappeared unawares. Perhaps, someone other than his doctor had concealed it stealthily.

Roasted turkey, dishes of pears and chestnut, pancake, Korean pine-needle cake, cow's milk, bread, *kimchi*, boiled meat dumplings, boiled rice, broiled eel, veal, sea cucumber and pine mushroom dishes and delicious watermelon were served. The President boastfully explained that the watermelon is a new seedless variety, which had been studied and developed in his country.

In addition, we were served with apple, sweet Korean cake, Korean gluten and rice cake and *insam* tea. I consumed every morsel just to keep up with the President. As I was told later, the raw materials of all the dishes we had consumed were all home-produced. This also clearly demonstrated the line of independent economic construction.

Next day a photograph showing me standing together with the President appeared in *Rodong Sinmun* . So I received greetings and "congratulations" everywhere.

An employee of the hotel and an attendant of the international telephone exchange asked to shake my hand and said in an excited tone, "We can hardly expect to meet him. We envy you".

I felt that these words made me understand how deeply ordinary citizens revere President Kim Il Sung.

In Quest of Historical Reorientation

Yasue Ryosuke, Director of
the Iwanami Bookstore

Reception Day–September 26, 1991

On September 26, 1991 I had a talk with President Kim Il Sung in Kanggye for the fifth time.

Kanggye is a city which forms a mountainous basin and is situated in the northern part of the Korean peninsula, near the Chinese border. It was surrounded by steep mountains that are part of the Rangrim and Kangnam Mountain Ranges. I was told that in the days of the Japanese colonial rule only a few breweries were there, and that it had no other educational establishments than primary schools. But today it has become the administrative centre of Jagang Province and the basis for natural resource development in the reaches of the Amnok River. It now has 4 universities.

I went from Pyongyang to Kanggye by helicopter, guided by Mr. Kim Yong Sun, Secretary of the Central Committee of the Workers' Party of Korea, and others. Overlooking an expanse of well-tended farmland and forests, I was impressed all the more by the diligence and endeavours for independence of the people of this country. The President told me that in this mountainous Jagang Province mulberry plantations of 10,000 hectares were being cultivated to produce newly 5,000 tons of silk and that generation of hydroelectric power would be reinforced by building more dams by making use of the deep valleys.

He was tanned and looked very healthy. He had been giving "on-the-spot guidance" for two weeks before in the northern regions. With a smile he said, "On-the-spot guidance is the best way to maintain my health". He looked very young so I could not believe that he would attain his eightieth year next year.

I visited the DPRK for the first time in 1972 and my Korea visit this time was my fifth one. Whenever I visited it,I had an exclusive interview with him. At times it lasted for long and he attracted me with his naive

remarks. This time, too, I was charmed by his youthful, lively tone of voice, and his being oblivious of the passage of time.

However, when Rev. Mun Ik Hwan and the coed Rim Su Gyong became the topic of conversation the President said dejectedly, "It's a pitiful nation". The well-known old reverend and the young coed of south Korea were quite confident that Korea should be a single reunified country, and had visited Pyongyang in order to prove it in person, and were still in prison there today. Coed Rim Su Gyong had arrived in Pyongyang on June 30, 1989 as the representative of the National Council of Student Representatives in south Korea for the 13th World Festival of Youth and Students, and returned to the south across the Military Demarcation Line on August 15, despite the opposition of the south Korean government. I saw a documentary film showing this. I was deeply impressed at the sight of middle-aged and old women greeting her and sending her off, their faces wet with tears.

The President stressed that Washington is the ringleader of the forces that restrain the improvement of relations between north and south Korea and the normalization of the relations between Japan and Korea. His words were not new ones. But I felt in his accent something more emphatic than before. This criticism suggests that he wants not to imprudently oppose the United States but to hold negotiations between Korea and the United States on an equal footing. One will be able to understand this to the full through the speech of the President which is recorded in the notes of his interview. I think that the big countries will foolishly put continuous pressure upon north Korea but it will adhere to its consistent principle of reunification and national independence while taking flexible measure to meet the situation.

While staying in Pyongyang for ten days from September 21, I met Kim Yong Nam, Vice-Prime Minister and concurrently Foreign Minister, Kim Yong Sun, Hwang Jang Yop and Yun Ki Bok, Secretaries of the Central Committee of the Workers' Party of Korea, Jong Jun Gi, Chairman of the Society for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries, Jon In Chol, Senior Representative to the Korea-Japan Talks and other cadres and exchanged innermost opinions with them on today's international situation connected with Korea.

After returning home, I was repeatedly asked the same questions: "How does north Korea view today's international situation?" and "Has

north Korea's stance toward international affairs changed?"

I felt intensely that north Korea grasps the international situation realistically in various respects and copes with it much more sensitively than before. However, at the same time I renewed my judgement of the fact that it attaches more importance to the fundamental stance. I believe that this positively promises for a change. Only when our principles are made clear, can we correctly judge the progress of our negotiations and find a tangible solution. The question of nuclear inspection can be taken as an example in this connection. As the President says frankly, north Korea does not oppose "nuclear inspection itself", but because the negotiations have been aimed at infringing on its independence and driving it into a corner, it defies it and does not comply with it.

Foreign Minister Kim Yong Nam said:

"It's understandable that all of you in Japan have a particularly deep interest in the nuclear problem. If nuclear weapons are used practically in Korea, Japan runs into peril as well. So, I hope that you will think about this problem more seriously from an objective standpoint. We say that we do not develop nuclear. You do not, presumably, believe this, but a great number of nuclear weapons have already been deployed in the south and there could be a nuclear attack from the sea. Nevertheless, why do all of you in Japan make an issue of the use of the 'nuclear' of the north so seriously but don't do of the system of nuclear attack from the south?" This is reasonable thinking.

I have so far thought that north Korea should accept nuclear inspection in order to create a new situation. While in Pyongyang, I was of the same opinion. However, at the same time, I thought that in order to demand this of north Korea, we should keep an unprejudiced mind and make more efforts.

In other words, we should pay careful attention to the trends of Japanese public opinion on the situation in which, while preparations for the withdrawal of nuclear weapons from south Korea have been talked about, the introduction of the "three principles for the Japanese-type of denuclearization" (widely known incompleteness of the clause prohibiting the bringing in of nuclear weapons) is examined by the governments of the United States and south Korea. In addition, we should be aware of the fact that in the negotiations for normalizing the relations between

Japan and Korea which have just begun, Japan strenuously insists on accepting nuclear inspection though it is directly irrelevant to the negotiations between the two countries. The negotiations for normalizing the relations between Japan and Korea are between the governments for liquidating the ignominious past of Japan itself for the sake of Japan and, at the same time, they are aimed at creating a situation favourable to the easing of tensions in the Korean peninsula. But the stance of the Japanese government is obviously opposed to this.

Nevertheless, I am more optimistic about the solution of the problem of nuclear inspection than before. The 4th north-south premier-level talks which were held in Pyongyang from October 22 convince me of this. The Japanese press that regards north Korea as being obstinate for no reason at all should recover a bit more of objectivity. There are many instances which show that Japan had given false or even wild reports on Korea in the past. I cannot agree with Japan's report on President Kim Il Sung's Chinese visit in the beginning of October.

The opinion of the West and Japan on north Korea, their report on it in particular, are open to errors, firstly, because in the period of colonial rule they brought humiliation and sufferings upon it and still do so today but do not want to perceive history and reality as they are; secondly, because though the system of cold war between the East and the West collapsed, Japan wants more than ever to view north Korea with a Western eye, that of Washington in particular, as a yardstick, I think. In the case of Japan, whose volitional power to amend its historical errors on its own accord is very weak, that eye cannot but be more open to doubt. It cannot be denied that we often hear voices saying: "How will north Korea be changed? It's a future problem on how to view north Korea." However, I'm wont to say that "how we have so far viewed north Korea is the nub of the problem".

I cannot help saying that the understanding of the Japanese public toward north Korea is much too poor and it has been scantily improved. In Pyongyang, which I visited after a six-year interval, I thought more seriously than ever about how we could correct this defect of ours.

The President Whom I Met after a 13-Year Interval

Wakabayashi Hiroshi, Representative Member and Secretary-General of the Japanese Committee Supporting the Independent Peaceful Reunification of Korea

Reception Day–September 30, 1991

The First Interview

I met and talked with the President on April 17, 1978 for the first time, when I visited Korea as the Secretary-General of the delegation of the Japan Committee Supporting the Independent Reunification of Korea led by Mr. Iwai Akara. I met him at the guest house on Moran Hill, a hill carpeted with greenery. When our car arrived, the President was already standing at the entrance to greet us, giving a tight squeeze of the hand to each of us with a happy smile. His hand was warm. Because I had served at the Foreign Affairs Department of the General Council of Trade Unions of Japan, I had had the opportunity of meeting the leaders of many countries. But I cannot forget my handshake with the President, or that of Tito, the President of Yugoslavia. Here I will not refer to his reply to the question of Mr. Iwai because it is included in pages 180 to 184 of the 33rd volume of Kim Il Sung's *Works*. There I found that on the 18th, next day, the Socialist Labour Law was adopted at the Supreme People's Assembly. I remember that when the law was adopted at its session, I attended it as an observer and heard it through simultaneous interpretation.

Towards the end of the interview with the President the question came up in the conversation of the Japanese committee publishing a book introducing the Korean situation in connection with the promotion of friendship and interchange aimed at mutual understanding. At that time, Mr.Iwai said, pointing to me: "After returning home, this honoured

man will write a book." It is now pleasant to recall that those words made me interested in the Korean question for a long time. In this way, the book *Notes on the Korean Question* came to be published though it is out of print now and this triggered off my writing *A Trip to Mt. Paektu.*

An Interview after a 13-Year Interval

Under the sponsorship of the International Liaison Committee for Peace and the Reunification of Korea, the function of the International Solidarity March Movement for Supporting the Reunification of Korea took place from September 29 to October 4, 1991 in Pyongyang and I participated in it as one of the vice-chairmen of the liaison committee. On September 30, the second day of the function, all the participants, about 300, were invited to a luncheon party held in the large banquet hall of the Kumsusan Assembly Hall in the building where the President attends to his duties.

CILRECO is the abbreviation of the French name of the International Liaison Committee for Peace and the Reunification of Korea; it was set up at an international meeting which was held in Brussels, the capital of Belgium, for the first time in February 1977 in support of the reunification of Korea.

Before the beginning of the party we posed for a souvenir photograph with the President. The cadres of the liaison committee were introduced to him individually and shook hands with him. His hand was as warm and firm as it had been 13 years ago. Before entering the banqueting hall after posing for our photograph, we had a talk with him in the waiting room for about 20 minutes. In a ringing voice he explained in detail to Marshal Costa Comes, the ex-President of Portugal and Honorary Chairman of the CILRECO, and Patas, the ex-General of the Army of Greece and Honorary Chairman of the CILRECO, the economic effect of the West Sea Barrage in view of the agricultural achievements made in conditions of a heavy rainfall last year, and weather suited to farming this year. He laughingly pointed out that its construction cost had already paid for itself. At the banquet table I was seated opposite him. I often watched his movement surreptitiously while eating. He frequently said something to those at his side but the voice of the interpreter did not reach me.

It seemed to me that President Kim Il Sung likes to drink.

But I was told that on the doctor's advice he abstains from it. He took three glassfuls of *insam* wine and then sipped beer slowly. Anyway, I was struck with wonder because he was so healthy and vigorous that one could not believe that in half a year he would attain his eightieth year. The food offered at table was a substantial meal for me, while he ate nearly all of it.

During the meal those at his sides addressed questions to him and he replied at frequent intervals. I saw that he paid constant attention to all the guests with a benign eye. I recollected my friend, a Korean resident in Japan who had graduated from Kyoto University through a high school under the old system of education during the war. He said to me: "Kim Il Sung is a man whose personality makes us want to offer our lives for him."

Mr. Takagi Takeo took the lead in introducing the personality and exploits of President Kim Il Sung in Japan. In his book *Kim Il Sung, Master of Leadership*, which was published in 1973, Takagi Takeo impressively introduced Kim Il Sung, through authentic accounts, saying that from the first days he had embarked on the road of revolution, he had always been among the masses. I remember that in the closing part of the book he wrote that there were several men who were called Kim Il Sung in the period of the anti-Japanese armed struggle. The name of Kim Il Sung was a synonym for an immortal hero of the Korean revolution.

Photographs of his relatives who were killed in the fight against Japanese imperialism are hung up in the native home of the President in Mangyongdae. Seeing them, journalist Burchett wrote, "Such a great family was a model of patriotic families in those days". Today, seated at the table across from me President Kim Il Sung, a representative man of the first generation of revolution who was born into such a family and fought for national liberation in an alien land and after liberation has devoted his body and soul to the building of an independent country of the Korean people, rose before my mind's eye together with his gallant image in the period of the anti-Japanese armed struggle, including the march to Pochonbo and the Xiaowangqing Battle, an image full of enthusiasm and vigor in which at the meeting for founding the Party he had advocated national independence without using the difficult terms

of socialism and the spectacle of the President talking so kindly, among the ruins of the Korean war, with the workers and peasants.

His style of work is particularly well known as "on-the-spot guidance". Mr. Takagi Takeo's book gave a detailed explanation of it. According to those whom the President met along the way of his "on-the-spot guidance," there is no estrangement between him and the masses at all. I think that "the art of leadership" signifies his distinguished work with the people. The number of those who, as the Japanese did, had met the President who is so busy in dealing with state affairs is not small. The import of the words he made at that time is included in Kim Il Sung's *Works* so one can read it at any time.

However, those who have heard his voice are wont to say that they were greatly impressed not only by the import of his speech but also his personality that permeated it. I regard it fortunate to have those who met him recollect his personality and to congratulate him on his 80th birthday.

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